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BRITAIN AND GERMANY

IT is exactly twenty-five years since British and German soldiers fraternised over their Christmas dinner on the Western Front. To-day, once more at war, we all know that sooner or later there must be friendship between common people on both sides of the trenches if Europe is not to be irretrievably ruined. On both sides and indeed all over the world civilised people loathe the war, but do not know how to escape it. In England, with an exciting victory at sea and an increasing realisation of the ruthless nature of Nazi methods, there is a tendency for opinion to harden to an acceptance of the necessity of a war fought out to the bitter end. On the other extreme there are those who from a variety of motives agitate against the war as if the Nazis were no longer a danger to us and to Europe. We believe that there is still room for a middle opinion. It is still true that we fight not against the mass of the German people but against the Nazis; and it is most of all to be regretted that British and French propaganda and the speeches of our statesmen have not been more intelligently directed to an appeal to the submerged decency of Germany.

Neutrals, recently in Germany, report grumbling and discontent, but they add that the result of the war and of the injudicious propaganda campaign against the personality of the Führer has so far been to solidify public opinion behind the Nazis. The right method was, and still is, to state peace aims which could serve as a basis for a negotiated peace if the Nazis were willing to listen. To do this effectively would involve co-operation of neutrals. If Hitler refused such terms, the German people would know that it was their Government that stood between them and peace. That might not now have an immediate effect, but it would at least be a beginning and, as the war of siege proceeded, the power of those who still want peace in Germany would increase. But we have to recognise that we are a long way from achieving that split in German opinion. A Scandinavian observer who has just returned from Germany reports that when the news of the bomb outrage in Munich came through the people in the cafes "sat dumb and were too upset even to buy the evening papers." The news of the attack on Hitler and of his escape dumbfounded them. They did not rage, but neither did they cheer. On the economic side, Germany is far from being in the desperate plight that propaganda would desire. The Nazis have been ruthlessly cutting down consumption to maintain exports. But the German people are acclimatised by years of war economy. We must expect no speedy breakdown. This unhappy people will remain loyal behind the Führer as long as they fear allied revenge more than they hate war.

Scuttling to Valhalla

What accounts for the inglorious end of the *Graf Spee?* Clearly no reason that satisfied her Captain who shot himself in protest. The existence of technical secrets in her machinery scarcely accounts for the order to scuttle her. The order to scuttle came direct from the Führer in person, and it may well answer to some oddity of the Nazi mind, which our less heroic temperament finds it difficult to grasp. Two other courses were open to her. Captain Langsdorff might have tried to fight his way out to sea. He would have encountered only his former adversaries, the *Ajax* and *Achilles*, one badly damaged, and the fresh cruiser *Cumberland* which replaced the *Exeter*—that is to say, a total gunpower very much less formidable than his own. The *Renown* and the *Ark Royal* were still a thousand miles away and the tale that the French battleship *Dunquerque* was on the spot is merely untrue. The other alternative to making a fight for it was internment in Montevideo; this would have preserved a valuable ship for Germany, on the assumption that she expects to win the war. But the Nazi movement has always plumed itself on its defiance of reason. The same mysterious suicidal impulse must be called into account for the scuttling of the valuable liner *Columbus* to avoid capture off the American Coast. The story of the battle of the River Plate has moved the nation to pride in the men and officers of these three ships. It is now clear that the gunnery of the *Graf Spee* was accurate and her heavy shells rained destruction on the *Exeter*. She dropped out of the battle only after she had suffered a hundred casualties, most of them mortal.

The Battle in the Air

The Air Ministry blundered badly in its treatment of the news of the air battle over the Bight when a large force of British bombers met for the first time the new Messerschmitt fighters. Its first announcement suggested a British success: with a loss of seven of its own planes, our force had brought down twelve of the enemy's bombers or half the total number engaged. The Germans, on their side, claimed an overwhelming victory. Out of 52 British planes "at least 40" were destroyed. All that we are now told is that the total of the British force was less than 36, the original German estimate of our losses. The only way to deal with a problem of this kind is to publish from the first a full and candid account of any reverse, as the Admiralty to its credit always does. The "new" German fighter is a formidable engine of destruction, but is it wholly new? Unless we are mistaken, some specimens were at work in Spain in the last phases of the struggle in Aragon. The impression given is that on this occasion these planes outclassed the British planes opposed to them. There is always an element of conjecture in recording the exploits of under-water craft, but Mr. Churchill in his spirited broadcast was sure that our submarine the *Ursula* had sunk a cruiser, while the *Salmon* had damaged two others. The German war on neutrals at sea continues with great ruthlessness and a considerable measure of success. The new phase of frightfulness is a campaign in the North Sea by German planes upon our trawlers, aggravated in some instances by machine-gun fire directed at the survivors as they cling to the wreckage or struggle in the waves.

The Finnish War

In spite of the courage and defence put up by the Finns, the Russians can this week register progress in their invasion of Finland. It seems probable that their underestimation of their adversary led them at the start to use only second-line troops who may have been ill-equipped, though it would be unwise to credit all the stories to this effect. They are now paying the Finns the compliment of employing their best troops. The most dangerous of their operations is their march in two columns across the "Waist-line" to the head of the Gulf of Bothnia. After a severe but temporary reverse, this advance continues at a pace that seems to be accelerating. It will, if successful, achieve two main objects. First, it will cut the coast railway which is the only line of communication by land with Sweden and foreign sources of supply. Secondly, it will cut the road that supplies the Finnish army on the Arctic front. This is now in retreat, devastating the country as it falls back. Here the Russians have secured their three objectives, the port of Petsamo, the nickel mines and direct contact with Norway. On the main front, however, the Mannerheim Line across the Karelian Isthmus, the Russians have as yet no successes to register. Their frontal attacks in close formation have cost them heavy losses, and the Line is still unbroken. Their turning movement round the head of Lake Ladoga seems to have been halted. Active once more in the air, their bombing raids have been on the whole ineffectual.

Italy's Secret

Count Ciano's speech on Sunday came very near to confirming the very questionable version of the Italo-German military alliance of May current in Italy—that it contained a secret clause stipulating that it should take effect only three years hence. It was agreed, he said, that a close season should be fixed during which international questions should not be pushed to extremes. Italy needed three and Germany four or five years before they would be ready for war—or, as he delicately put it, before they developed their maximum potential. We should not have rated the military superiority of Italy over Germany quite so high. We note that no confirmation of these disclosures has come from Berlin, which may have had less flattering reasons for omitting to involve the aid of her ally's army. If the Duce really believed that the Führer would sit idle for three years, he is a simpler man than we take him to be. One clear reason for Italian neutrality is, of course, that the alliance is intensely unpopular both with the people and the army. Though Count Ciano expressed himself with a restraint unusual in Fascist oratory, he had many implied criticisms to hurl at his ally. Berlin informed Rome of the Soviet pact only forty-eight hours before it was signed. The Führer, who had made up his mind to attack Poland by mid-August, brushed aside the Italian warning that this would involve war with the two Western Powers. The Count had the audacity to deny that Italy had any secret contacts "with Franco" before his rebellion: possibly not, he took command only at the last minute. But published documents and official Italian statements have already revealed the despatch of money and arms to the Spanish Fascist leaders several years earlier. The first Italian warplanes (as the French

Moroccan administration ascertained) left their aerodromes to join Franco before he raised his standard. The Count's opposition to any neutral Balkan block has startled that Peninsula: Italy prefers to deal with her neighbours singly. The speech gave no hint as to how and when Rome will seek her advantage in this war.

The Agriculture Muddle

At the beginning of the war breeders of pigs and poultry, like the rest of the agricultural community, were assured that they need have no anxiety about the supply of feeding-stuffs; and only a week or two ago the statement was made that two-thirds of the normal feeding-stuffs were available. Last week, however, it was discovered that there was very little reserve for the whole West Country, and much fine stock has had to be slaughtered. The Government had no doubt banked on the dealers making large purchasers in the autumn in the hope of handsome profits when prices rose. But the dealers apparently got wind of price-control and did not buy. This is only one instance of the flagrant inefficiency of our agricultural planning. The Ministry is far too inclined to make optimistic forecasts upon quite insufficient evidence and thus to permit us, in a period when rationed consumption is essential, to live gaily off our capital. Farmers are beginning to wonder whether the Ministry's assurance that there are ample supplies of fertiliser, seed corn, grass-seed and agricultural machinery is equally unfounded. If the calculation was based upon the normal spring demand, as seems only too probable, it is pertinent to ask what will happen to the extra million and a half acres which the Government hopes to see under the plough next year.

Rationing

It is now almost certain that meat, as well as bacon and butter, will be rationed in the new year. It is high time. The months of hesitation which preceded the decision to begin rationing have cost the country dear. The ordinary housewife will welcome a measure which offers her the certainty of a regular supply, if limited, of these foodstuffs in place of the unlimited uncertainty which has made Friday's shopping a burden in many areas. Nothing could have been more irresponsible than the campaign against rationing in certain newspapers which boast of their patriotism, except perhaps the way in which Mr. Morrison has permitted himself to be influenced by it. In our opinion, sugar also should be included. Last September we had a year's supply in hand, but sales went up to a record high and have stayed there ever since, with the result that serious inroads, unevenly and unfairly distributed among the population, have been made into our reserves. In a war of siege and counter-siege, we could learn something from our enemies, who, have not hesitated to enforce the degree of equality of sacrifice which rationing implies.

All MSS. and letters should be addressed to the Editor, at 10 *Great Turnstile, High Holborn, London, W.C.*1.

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TO MEN OF GOODWILL

WHEN in the early weeks of this war President Roosevelt defined America's neutrality in his message to Congress, he set before his country a purpose that rings in our memory as a challenge. He saw that the priceless heritage of Western civilisation is endangered in the Continent that evolved it, and he spoke of keeping the United States out of the war, that it might enjoy on her soil an asylum in which it should certainly survive. Against the pessimism implied in that ambition, we must stake our determination to preserve the values of our civilisation even though we fight. It is an aim incomparably more difficult than that which Mr. Roosevelt set before America. War itself is a negation of civilisation. When nations struggle for survival, they are apt to narrow their ends to the winning of victory at any price. It is a commonplace that truth is the first casualty in every war, and proverbial wisdom has told us, in a tongue older than our own, that arms silence law. It seems ironical, while we organise mass slaughter, even to speak of humanity. And who among us, as we order our ranks for the disciplined effort, would dare to predict that the mode of life which we call democracy can survive if the war long continues? Yet we have lost the war if we sacrifice what we value in fighting it. What is it that we prize as the heritage of the West, what is it that a Nazi victory would sweep from our Continent, unless it be these very things—truth and law, mercy and the respect for human personality that is the foundation of democracy. Can we so wage our battle that these are among the survivors?

We intend to try. That war, in its nature barbaric, need not involve the end of decency—that is the moral, as we read the story, of the refusal of Commander Bickford to torpedo the *Bremen*. He obeyed a scruple of humanity and kept the law of the sea by refraining from an action that any German U-boat would have performed as a matter of course. It is probable, none the less, that if he had taken his opportunity and had sunk the great ship and left her crew to take its chance in the water, he would have inflicted a heavy blow on the self-confidence of the enemy. By refraining, he not only proved his own loyalty to these ideals of humanity and law: he demonstrated his faith that his fellow-countrymen would commend his refusal to score a success at any price. It may seem a small instance, but latent in it is the whole principle for which we are contending in this war. It is because the Führer launched his torpedo, when he had the chance, first at the Czechs and then at the Poles, without regard to law or humanity, that we find ourselves at war. Always and in every decision of policy between States, in war as in peace, this issue is latent. From the standpoint of military strategy the German soldiers who ordered the invasion of Belgium in 1914 may have acted correctly; but they defied the law that is above the interests of empires. Only the same plane of military values can a defence be made for Stalin's invasion of Finland. So long as our sailors and our statesmen control their torpedoes as Commander Bickford did, in their diplomacy no less than in the daily conduct of the struggle, we are attempting to meet the challenge implied in Mr. Roosevelt's Message. We are ensuring, even in this

blood-stained Continent, that Western Civilisation shall survive.

Reasonably, too, we may point to the astonishing spectacle of tolerance that this island presents in the fourth month of war. Though all the powers to suppress liberty are in the Government's hands, there has been as yet no fettering of opinion. It is open to Communists and Fascists to exercise in the press and even at street-corners an entire freedom of speech which they would themselves deny to others, if they could seize power. The liberty of opinion has been respected in this war more fully as yet than it was in the last, either in this country or in the sister-democracy of America. Kindness and tolerance have been shown to the Germans and Austrians among us. We are proud to maintain these forms of civilised behaviour. But it is not enough to maintain them. On other sides our democracy remains unrealised. Economically and socially we are as much a class society as ever. We still have a million and a half unemployed; sometimes it seems as if nothing short of Hitler's bombs will end the slums. And the liberty of which we boast still remains an Imperial asset, a luxury we afford at home but parcel out in meagre rations to our dependencies. In India our statesmen have missed the opportunity that would have done more than anything else to commend our cause to free men. The triumphant answer to the charge that this is an imperialist war would have been the concession to India of the effective reality of self-government to-day, with a plain promise that she shall be a Dominion within a year of the peace. If with this we had included in our war-aims, in concert with the French, an offer to abandon all the privileges of monopoly and ownership in our dependent empires, we should have gone far to prove that the Western Civilisation we defend has the courage and sincerity of its values.

The problem of conserving here in Europe the civilisation to which Mr. Roosevelt offered a neutral refuge in America has another aspect, to which Mr. W. J. Turner and Mr. Ivor Brown have drawn attention In its first week the war robbed of their work and livelihood most of the artists among us, whether painters, musicians or actors. This nation is apt, even when it is prosperous and at peace, to treat art as a luxury. Facing the impoverishment of a long war, it is tempted to dismiss it as a superfluity. To many of these artists the black-out has come as an utter disaster. They find themselves more helpless than their fellows in any continental country of equal pretensions, for among us neither the State nor the municipality endows them as servants of civilisation. We would rest the case for a generous policy of conservation not merely in their interests but even more in our own. If we delay to adopt it, the end of a three years' war would find us with only a broken relic of the trained skill we possessed when it began. The orchestras would be scattered and the theatres bankrupt: the painters and musicians would either have fled across the Atlantic to Mr. Roosevelt's refuge, or they would have taken to some manual craft to earn their bread. Many a year would pass before we could again build up our pre-war standards and traditions.

During the catastrophe of the great slump America faced something resembling this problem, and found for it under the New Deal a solution that we might take as our model. The Federal Government set to work to keep alive the trained skill of American artists without loss to their self-respect. It was laid down in a treasury minute that a minute fraction of the cost of every new Federal building should go to pay for sculpture or frescoes. In existing post-offices, wherever a suitable wall offered a chance, mural paintings were encouraged. Unemployed actors were endowed to run theatres and touring companies. Released from the tyranny of the box-office they did their work with distinguished and pioneering success. Orchestral and chamber concerts were endowed in the same way. Always the price of admission whether for plays or concerts was low enough to draw the masses, and in this way the scheme served an educational purpose. Writers were set to work on guide-books and local histories, which often achieved real distinction. Paintings produced under the plan were soon adorning the dreary walls of government offices. To do something of this kind in this country would add only an imperceptible fraction to the cost of this war. But it would keep art and the artists alive. The values that we understand by civilisation are not only those of mercy and truth and intellectual integrity. They include our concern for beauty and the artist's vision of life. That, too, is a part of the heritage whose growth we would foster within its cradle in the older world.

THE ELECTORAL TRUCE

"LABOUR," said Mr. Attlee a week ago at Durham, "is critical of the Government's past and present, and distrustful of its future." That attitude is even more widely felt among the rank and file of the party than of its leadership. They find it difficult to explain the wide abyss which separates the policy of Labour from that of the Government with the encumbrance of the electoral truce. They know how largely the past blunders of the Government contributed to the coming of the war. They find it difficult to believe that the Government which abandoned Spain and betrayed Czecho-Slovakia, which is silent over Fascist adventures in China and Abyssinia and Albania, can think seriously in the terms which make possible a satisfactory peace. It is not easy for them to accept the bona fides of the Labour Party as an opposition intent on power so long as it fails to take the one vital step which alone can put it on the high-road to power.

For it is clear, after three months of war, that although the Government speaks fair words to Labour, it does not share Labour's view of the ends to be realised in this conflict. The peace aims of the Labour Party involve a large step at once to socialism, if they are to be given effective meaning; no one knows better than the Labour Party that this step will not be taken by a Government of which Mr. Chamberlain is the head and Sir John Simon and Sir Samuel Hoare the pivotal members. The Labour Party is pledged to an end of the pre-war imperialism. The acid test of this policy is India; and it is now painfully apparent that the Government has no intention of pursuing a policy in India that diminishes in any serious degree our central hold upon its destiny. There is not even a hint that, under suitable circumstances, the Government proposes to internationalise the administration of the African colonies. The contrast between Labour's sense that this war is futile unless it brings the conditions out of which the foundations of a new world can be laid, and the Government's nostalgia for the old leaps to the eyes.

The depth of the divergence is not less clear on the home front. On the problems of war finance and war production Labour is deeply disturbed not less at the principles than at the methods upon which the Government places reliance. It is alarmed at the failure to deal with unemployment. It suspects the implications of that obvious lack of energy in the

attempt to keep the social services, above all education, at their proper level. It dislikes the wholesale conference of subsidies to industry and agriculture without guarantees for the maintenance of Labour standards as their condition. It is rightly suspicious of the way in which the industrial controls are in the hands of exactly the men who cannot easily transcend the ordinary business conceptions in which they have been brought up. In things like pensions and soldiers' allowances it is rightly resentful at the niggardliness of Downing Street.

The error of the Labour Party is that it keeps its eyes far too firmly fixed on the House of Commons. On all these matters it keeps up a constant stream of pressure there; it even obtains an occasional concession from Ministers, much as a bone is flung to a troublesome dog. But, by maintaining the electoral truce, it deprives itself of the essential sanction it requires to attain its end; it cuts itself off from the support of public opinion. It leaves the Government to be opposed only by the extremist parties, so that the solid opinion of the constituencies has no real opportunity to express its views. The fight for power is unreal so long as the Government is aware that it need not seriously fear the effect of submitting itself to the judgment of by-elections. The situation has the appearance of shadow boxing in which the contestants have determined that under no circumstances will they fight seriously. It produces, no doubt, the external appearance of unity. But the appearance is known to everyone to be unreal, since its method is to suppress effective opportunity for the expression of differences. It disheartens the solid supporters of Labour; they feel that they have no way of compelling the Government to give adequate attention to their ideas. It disfranchises the unattached voter of progressive views who is anxious to emphasise purposes which he does not feel Mr. Chamberlain can represent. It creates the not unjustifiable suspicion that there are some, at least, among the leaders of the Labour movement who shrink, at this grave time, from the responsibility for power. It was a wise American who said the other day that people listen-in to "Lord Haw-Haw" because he is the one effective expression of political opposition in Britain.

No one will doubt the sincerity of Mr. Attlee's speech. But its proper corollary is the immediate ending of the political truce. If the Labour Party is really "critical of the Government's present" and "distrustful of its future," the way to enlist public support for its criticism and distrust is to appeal to public opinion; and the one effective medium for its expression in our system is to give the constituencies the full chance of making themselves heard. It is no answer to this view to say that it may involve a change of Government. Men ought not, in a democratic society, to assist in keeping in office a cabinet of which they are critical and distrustful; and, in any case, the last war showed that there can be changes of Government even in the gravest circumstances without disadvantage. More than this: to a mind as tenacious and obstinate as that of Mr. Chamberlain speeches on the floor of the House of Commons do not carry conviction. What will impress him is the knowledge that behind the view of the Labour Party there is increasingly ranged the support of the people. He cannot receive that impression while there is an electoral vacuum, and every day that the truce continues may well tend to weaken, rather than strengthen, the will of the Labour Party to break it. It is far better to use the period of comparative lull to discover what the country really thinks and feels than to wait for some grave blunder to provide the opportunity of action. The simple truth is that the "criticism and distrust" which Mr. Attlee expressed are so widely felt that to provide it with a sanction the Government may not neglect is the obvious way to prevent the commission of blunders. We are all united in the conviction that Hitlerism is a menace to all the values we care for in civilisation. We are not united about the path which leads to the removal of Hitlerism. To attain that unity we need to resort to the source of real authority in a democratic state—the will of the common people. The sooner the Labour Party anchors its faith in the effort to organise that will behind it, the sooner it will achieve the purposes it seeks to accomplish. The electoral truce delays the opportunity it ought to grasp with all vigour before it is too late.

A LONDON DIARY

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL'S exciting broadcast on Monday has not, for the moment, added to his popularity with journalists. They have known for some time that the Canadian troops were on their way to Britain and last week-end correspondents went up to Scotland to meet them. They were instructed that the story could not be released till Wednesday morning: it was to be written up on Sunday for Wednesday's papers. And then Mr. Churchill blithely popped out with it on Monday night! All the press stories had to be rewritten and pegged into Winston's speech. Mr. Hore-Belisha may have a grievance too; for this was an Army, not an Admiralty story. The grievance is the more real because Mr. Churchill needs no extra titbits to make his broadcasts a success. Colleagues who have no flair for broadcasting and who have not laboured at its difficult technique to supply the lack of natural capacity, may, the journalists feel, be tempted to follow his example and let out nice bits of news that the press have been told to suppress. The incident will, however, be useful if it brings to a head the discontent with the censorship and the Ministry of Information, and forces Mr. Chamberlain to put a suitable person—perhaps Sir Walter Monckton—in charge of a reconstructed Ministry. If this happens he will receive invaluable assistance from the new Head of the Films Division. Sir Kenneth Clark has shown what steely diplomacy can do with Royal Academicians and I think he will be equally successful in dealing with the gentlemen of Wardour Street.

* * *

One factor worth noticing about the victory of the River Plate is that it was the first incident of the war which built itself up properly into a real story. The slow filtering through of news to disprove the Nazi boasts of victory, the suspense of the days at Montevideo with a little diplomatic intrigue to add spice to the naval doings, and then the climax of waiting up till midnight on Sunday to hear the end—all this gave Mr. Churchill a grand opportunity of which he made the most. An account given me of German propaganda in Scandinavia shows that this fillip was sorely needed. Ever since the war began, Dr. Goebbels had been quietly building up in the press and on the radio a picture of the huge British fleet immobilised by the daring of a tiny, heroic, Nazi navy. Look, he was saying, not only does Britain harry you with her contraband control; she can't even protect her own harbours from our attack. And by combining this with disclosures of British social conditions—the state of the evacuated slum children came as a real shock to Scandinavian democrats—he was managing to persuade a good many people naturally sympathetic to Britain that, since we were decadent, they had better come to terms with Berlin. My informant gave me some interesting details which showed why Nazi publicity is so much better than our own. To begin with, their news is prompt, positive and interesting: whereas ours is slow and often so reticent that it gives an unfortunate impression of evasiveness. The Scandinavian papers have shop-windows, where the latest telegrams are displayed quite impartially. Here is the sort of thing that happens. First, a German flash: "Battered British Warship enters Stavanger." Then after a few hours a second German flash amplifying the story. After 48 hours comes the first British flash: "British ships shelter from storm in Norwegian harbour." When this happens time after time, the most sympathetic neutral is bound to lose confidence, until our slow methods are rewarded by a great news story like the victory of the River Plate.

* * *

There are other things which cannot be excused by the

principle of slow but sure. German picture papers dominate Scandinavian kiosks, with superb "action" shots of the war, which contrast sharply with the "stills" which is all that a British weekly can generally provide. Moreover, whereas a British daily costs 6*d.* to 8*d.* and a British weekly anything from 1*s.* to 2*s.*, excellent German illustrated weeklies are on sale for 5*d.* This is because the Nazis have a special reduced price abroad—the *Adler*, illustrated Air Force paper, costs 20 *pf.* inland and 15 *pf.* abroad—and do not charge for unsold returns, whereas British newsagents since the beginning of the war have abolished "sale or return" abroad. The fault lies not with the newsagents but with the Ministry of Information which should at once begin subsidising the export both of our dailies and weeklies to neutral countries, and see to it that they can get "action" photos as good as those of the Germans. The expense would be trivial compared with the effect on neutral opinion.

* * *

It is common form, with States as with individuals, to traduce those whom one injures. But the admirers of Soviet aggression are broadcasting a singularly perfidious travesty of the politics of Finland. It is, of course, true that in 1918 the Finnish Whites called in Von der Golz and a German army to defeat the Socialists. It is equally true that under Baron Mannerheim a savage white terror followed, and that reaction was in the saddle thereafter for many a year. But in 1936 a Coalition of the Left swept the polls, under universal suffrage, and Farmer-Labour ministers were in power up to the bombing of Helsinki. The Socialist leader, M. Tanner, who was and still is a chief figure in the Cabinet, had been one of the leaders of the Reds in the Civil War. So far was the Cajander Cabinet from being "Fascist" (or was it only "Social-Fascist"?) that it actually passed an Act depriving the Fascist Party of political rights—an Act which the Courts disallowed. Everyone knows that this Democratic little country has a particularly vigorous co-operative movement which serves both peasants and workers, and that its chief wealth, its forests, is largely the property of the State. The feud between Russians and Finns dates back to the Conquest under Tsar Alexander I, and it was always influenced by the sense of the Finns that theirs is an ancient Western culture. They are Lutherans, and illiteracy was unknown among them at a time when few Russians below the tiny middle class could read.

* * *

When Leon Blum was over here last week, he was carefully catechised about the suppression of civil liberties in France. Blum, who has entirely recovered from the lassitude which seemed to afflict him lately, was in tremendous form and frankly puzzled by our anxieties. "We are in a state of siege," he said, "and the Government has done nothing unconstitutional. What would you have done if, just *after* a war had begun, one of your biggest parties, which had won its votes largely on patriotic anti-Nazi slogans, suddenly switched round and demanded immediate peace? You in Britain can treat your Communists as a joke or a luxury: we have to deal with them as a serious menace, the instrument inside France of a foreign and unfriendly power." My friend tells me that he felt after meeting Blum that it was mistake to talk of France going Fascist. Blum admitted that the Government had been *maladroit* in its handling of the situation but suggested that he as a socialist and a democrat would have done the same thing—only more tactfully. There is certainly a difference between a democracy which temporarily suspends civil liberties while retaining its constitution, and a State in which power has been seized by Fascists; and in France democracy has always been ruthless whenever the national independence was endangered. I could not help feeling the contrast when I saw the Communist demonstration last Sunday in Hyde Park vowing its undying loyalty to the U.S.S.R., under the benevolent protection of policemen. If we are anxious about French democracy, the French are baffled by us.

The troops arrived in the village last week-end and seventeen tired men packed into my cottage. They had come from a large town where they had had a very good time. What were they to do in a tiny hamlet during dark winter evenings? They seemed pleased with the promise of a dart board, but the one thing that really made a difference was the provision of a wireless set. They listened excitedly for news of the *Admiral Graf von Spee;* Lord Haw-Haw provided interest in between whiles. My chief impression was one of boredom and I was astonished how much difference a radio set made. Returning to town I found a letter on my table from a sergeant stationed in another village not very far away. He writes: "I would like you to use your influence to produce for us a radio set; it does not have to be a 1940 model, I only want it for my platoon who are here for Christmas, and I would like a set to lighten their otherwise dull Christmas." If a radio set turns up I will see that it gets there in time for New Year's Eve.

* * *

Here is a true story. At the beginning of the war a certain Government Department suddenly needed a number of women secretaries. A friend of mine applied, and although she explained that she could neither type nor do shorthand, she was taken on. The first job she was given was typing, and when she again explained she could not type, she was told to get hold of a typewriter and learn. So she spent her office hours learning, and after some weeks she agreed to type a friend's book in order to practise. One evening she stayed late and her boss found her hard at it. "Working overtime?" he said, "I hope you are getting overtime pay." Rather shamefacedly she explained that she was doing her own private work and trying to make herself a competent typist: so she could not possibly claim overtime. "Nonsense," said the kind-hearted civil servant, "no overtime here without pay." And, believe it or not, she had to take it. I should add that my friend had not got her job by influence!

* * *

If I did send Christmas presents to distinguished people, what should I send? Some are easy this year. Stalin would get those two little manuals, *Polish up your Polish* and *Finish off your Finnish*, although all except the first chapter of the latter is missing from my copy. For Hitler, I think that a scuttle of coal on a plate would be nice, and for Franco a dry Bourbon biscuit, while Mussolini should surely have a copy of *Pilgrim's Progress* with all references to Mr. Facing Both Ways underlined in red. Coming nearer home, Lord Beaverbrook should get a Life Membership of the Co-operative. Lord Elton should get one of our five-shilling subscriptions to THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION. As for Lord Rothermere and Lord Southwood and Mr. Churchill I can think of many suitable gifts for them, but so can readers of this column. It is a good game for Christmas. This journal will pay a guinea to the person who sends the six best suggestions for presents to public men to the Competition Editor by next Friday.

CRITIC

"WATERSIDE"

THE village is transformed. Somehow it seems gayer, a spot more rowdy and the tempo is decidedly faster. The change has been gradual because the children from London were homesick at first and trailed the lanes, hand in hand, glaring ferociously at the natives and gathering in corners and under trees to compare notes on billets and "Mums."

"Wot's yore 'Mum' like?"

"A proper terror, onter yer all the time. Searching yer 'ead and won't let yer sleep in yer clothes."

"Mine's orlright but we never 'ave fish an' chips."

Then they began to settle down and show their paces. They are intelligent all right—sharp as needles, quick as whippets,

and they get the hang of things and the lie of the land before you can turn round.

My sister Dorothy is " Mum " to six, and they told her off for using American slang. Those Cockney voices, like the unmusical chirruping of sparrows, are heard everywhere. (They sound so much more like little angry birds than children.) All six are armed to the teeth with scout knives and cap and water pistols because the village kids, who incline to morbidity, had told them Dorothy's old house was haunted. They had sent to London " speshul " for these weapons, but they told Dorothy they didn't really think they'd be much use as everything went straight through ghosts. They want to help her with her spring-cleaning in case she comes on any " bones and relics."

Stella was " Mum " to nine for three days before the sorry condition of their skins was discovered to be due to scarlet fever and not to sunburn. Mum (*my* Mum), with her talent for selection has two models of behaviour who trundle sedately about on old tricycles of ours and bring in windfalls to the cook. There was one tiny spot of trouble about mounting guard under the walnut tree to shoo away the squirrels. Mum told them that they must let the squirrels have the nuts otherwise they'd starve in the winter. The kids thought Mum was potty, but they gave in.

When the wet weather started the village " Mums " went collecting and swapping and scrounging for mackintoshes, " Wellingtons," goloshes, and the new " babies " went splashing off to school in every kind of misfit and make-do with a hump on the posterior where the gas-mask was concealed.

There are several schools of thought in the village. One is for open windows, daily baths and stripping to the skin at bedtime. Another is for the *status quo*. Some say the kids should help in the house. Others say they are better out of the way. One school complains of raids on orchards and the chasing of cows. The other says there are far too many apples anyway and cows shouldn't be so silly as to be frightened by tiny tots.

The village ladies meet continually and discuss the new problems and responsibilities. They all gather in Mum's drawing-room and they all wear their hats except Lady Lockett, who is always hatless and dresses like an ostler. The proceedings open with a little mild discussion of the war and the petrol rationing. Lady Lockett rides her gardener's bicycle and advises the other ladies to do the same. Mrs. Pole-Todd, gazing through the streaming window at the boggy garden, remarks that the conditions in the trenches must be dreadful and she adds something about the flooded Siegfried Line and the poor Germans.

" Sorry for the Germans ? " barks Mrs. Boote-Smith, all fire and brimstone.

" Well, everything is so much worse for them, or so we hear," says Mrs. Pole-Todd weakly.

" Let them drown ! " says Mrs. Boote-Smith.

" Oh, I don't think the British Government would allow that to happen," says Mum. " Now as you all know, we have a very serious and urgent problem before us this morning— "

" And it's spreading," interrupts old Miss Carruthers hysterically. " Cases reported all the time, all *over* the county. And it's not only the dear little boys, some of the dear little girls too. And in Upper Matley there's a dear young mother from the East End and she— "

" Well, something's got to be done," says Mum, who has no liking for Miss Carruthers' sensationalism. " Mrs. Whipsey from the farm at Matley End was up here this morning in *despair*. She's got two and she says she's really fond of them and doesn't want to part with them. She's tried everything ; mackintosh sheets, no liquids at bedtime ; but the plaster on the parlour ceiling underneath fell in this morning and the poor woman says it just can't go on."

" Dr. Pinnock said wake them and get them up between ten-thirty and eleven and there'll be no more trouble," chipped in Miss Carruthers. " *Well*, Mrs. Day at the Post Office and Mrs. Creamer from the Toll-gate at Matley (they've got one each) both tried it but they said it happened afterwards *just the same*."

" Most of the ' mothers ' say the ticklish time is two o'clock in the morning," said Lady Lockett.

" Well, you take your chance," said Dorothy. " I set the alarm for two o'clock but when I got there it was too late."

" What," shrieked Miss Carruthers, " you don't say *you've* got one in *your* nice house ! "

" I've got three," said Dorothy proudly.

" Now that's really disgraceful," gasped Miss Carruthers.

Dorothy frowned and lit a cigarette.

" The littlest one, Willie, had a visit from his mother and his grown-up brother last Sunday. (The brother has a wife and baby billeted at the Lodge.) I said to the mother, did she *know* about Willie, and she said she had been afraid it would be his undoing (at least I think that was the expression she used), but that all her children (she's had twelve) had been the same, and it was only natural."

" That's true," murmured Stella, who had not spoken before.

" And then she called to the married son who was having a glass of beer in the smoking-room with my husband : ' You *did*, didn't yer, Alfie ? ' And he called back : ' Did wot ? ' And she said ' Weed yer bed.' He went awfully pink but he didn't deny it."

There was a bit of a pause. Stella blew her nose a lot and Dorothy smoked placidly towards the ceiling, avoiding Mum's eye. Mum doesn't like it when Dorothy tells these stories, verbatim, to the village ladies. The village ladies don't like it either, but they're all a bit scared of Dorothy.

" They ought to go back to the slums." It was Mrs. Boote-Smith who broke the silence.

" Ever seen the slums ? " Dorothy glanced sideways at Mrs. Boote-Smith.

" They should be treated as criminals," said Mrs. Boote-Smith, " and I refuse to discuss such a disgusting subject."

" Oh, no," said Mum, " we *must* discuss it and it is *not* a criminal offence. It is quite well known in all civilised countries."

She looked lingeringly at Mrs. Boote-Smith. Everybody present knew that Mrs. Boote-Smith's son, who was now a big contractor in the city, had been, in his youth, No. 1, top of the class, or what you will, in the subject under discussion. (It's extraordinary how things get about in a small village and what long memories country people have.)

" Well, I *do* think it's hard on the cottage people having to get up at all hours of the night," said Mrs. Pole-Todd.

" It's harder on them if they don't," said Lady Lockett.

" Now I have an *idea*," said Mum gaily. " That Mrs. Tremble who comes down from London in the summer has written to offer that lovely empty house of hers by the river for any emergency that may arise. I've spoken to the authorities *and* to Dr. Pinnock and I think we might try to run it as a home for all these poor little things. We have an army of volunteer helpers, and if we have all the little things under one roof where they can be helped and watched— "

" Matthew, Mark, Luke and John," murmured Stella, but Mum ignored her.

" I really think it would be worth trying."

" Please yourself," snapped Mrs. Boote-Smith.

" But I won't have these children stigmatised," said Mum. " There must be no mockery or pointing-of-the-finger at this home. Children are very sensitive."

" It's a very noble scheme," said Mrs. Pole-Todd.

" Which house is it ? " asked Dorothy.

" That nice one by the mill."

" Oh, you mean ' *Waterside !* ' "

" I went round last night in the black-out with a pot of white paint," said Mum quickly. " I just painted the name on the gate *right out*."

So it was settled, and the house without a name was loud with the chatter of excited sparrows.

Mum went up there yesterday afternoon with a basketful

of parlour games. Three or four of the small inmates were sitting on the door-step in the pouring rain. They were whispering together and swapping coloured chalks, marbles and strings of conkers.

"Get up at once," said Mum. "You'll get wet through."

Then something caught her eye. On the blank white board on the gate a childish hand had scrawled in red chalk the words: "Seegfreed Lin." BEATRIX LEHMANN

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to Mira Fink.

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.

Perhaps it ought to be accounted as the greatest victory for the British Navy that it was mainly responsible for the agreement between Russia and Germany.—Scrutator in the *Sunday Times*.

Oxford "Active Service" Bibles and New Testament Pocket Editions, bound in strong Waterproof Moroccoette, in Khaki, Navy and Air Force Blue.—Advt.

I believe that the establishment of the League of Nations has been responsible for the present war. I cannot conceive that there will be any gain by the extension of such a system.—Bishop of Gloucester, Letter in *Daily Telegraph*.

We present five young ladies—all silk nightdresses . . . priced at each 25s. Mistinguette—she's delightful! (1) Triple ninon. Mimi—she's delicious! (2) Broche crepe-de-chine. Cherie—she's marvellous! (3) Novelty striped chiffon. Loo Loo—she's maddening! (4) Dainty suzette. Just Gertie—she's it! (5) Embroidered satin. Priced at 25s. each.—Christmas Gift catalogue.

NUDE DANCE FOR MEN ON LEAVE

. . . "What if it's very cold?

"Well, that will mean we will have to put on some clothing—but not very much. After you've been a nudist for a time you find you can do without a great deal of the clothing that ordinary people wear

"A rigid rule forbids that any form of clothing, apart from wrist-watches and jewellery, may be worn.

"For those who cannot dance there will be the usual Christmas games, such as Hunt-the-Slipper."—*Sunday Dispatch*.

GOOD KING WENCESLAS LOOK'D OUT

Good King Wenceslas look'd out
Where the victors vaunted,
Death and terror stalked about
Fear his people haunted.
No bells chimed across the snows,
Heaven and earth seemed sleeping,
But the sighs of watchers rose
And the sound of weeping.

"Bitter is the bread we eat,
All our fires are ashes,
Bondage know we and defeat,
Feel the tyrant's lashes;
Mercy of the wolf we plead,
Of the butcher pity,
See our murdered children bleed
In our murdered City.

"Tricked by foe and sold by friend,
Sentenced to subjection,
Must this be our story's end
Stripped of all protection?
Must we sink in slavery
Saint- and God-forsaken?"

"No, your living shall be free
And your Dead awaken!" SAGITTARIUS

THE IMMORALITY OF GOOD PEOPLE

No one can have lived very long without discovering how widely goodness is distributed among the human race. Everywhere the ordinary man seems to be a kindly soul, capable of self-sacrifice, more given to loving than to hating, an enemy of cruelty and meanness. He may be selfish and over-ambitious in part of his nature, but there is usually a saving streak of goodness in him. Even those who are generally recognised as bad men cannot as a rule refrain from the pleasure of being occasionally good. Many excellent short stories were written in the nineteenth century about the goodness of bad women; they were not necessarily sentimental; they were largely true. Burglars and company promoters who rob the widow and orphan have also been distinguished for their moments of goodness. It is as though men realised, however unconsciously, that it is only in being good that they fulfil their destiny. Hence, when a man dies, even after having led a rather variegated life, it is the custom for his friends to recall how good he was, as though this were the thing that in our brief existence chiefly matters.

This being so, it is all the more surprising that civilisation has advanced so slowly. How does it come that the human race with its inevitable goodness has again and again allowed itself to be dictated to by bad men? I imagine the Romans of the early Christian era were as good men as their neighbours; yet they allowed themselves to be ruled by Nero, Caligula, and all sorts of dubious people. Reading history, you might come to the conclusion that it must be easier for the forces of evil than for the forces of good to organise themselves. It sometimes looks as though goodness had a weakening effect on the will. Certainly, Satan with his magnificent will-power has created havoc in the ranks of the good through the centuries. To-day in Europe, I am sure, goodness is as widespread as it has ever been; yet in one country after another it has turned the other cheek to evil, and Satanism is for the moment triumphant. Yet none of these countries is inhabited by devils. Good men, women and children predominate everywhere. How dumb they are, however, how incohesive, how aimless in comparison with the others. They seem to have as little capacity for union as a population of lunatics.

I fancy that one reason why the good have not done more to shape society is that in some respects they are so unprincipled. In private they are all kindness, excellent in all the relations of family and friendship, just, humane, and moderately unselfish. Being good, however, they cannot be content with practising their virtues in private. They devote themselves selflessly to ideals. They form churches and societies for the salvation of mankind. They live for causes. It is then that the good man is in most danger. To serve a cause wholeheartedly without losing one's principles is apparently almost as difficult as walking the tight-rope.

We find many examples of this in the history of religious persecution. The Catholics and Protestants who treated each other so abominably were, it is fairly certain, mostly human beings whom you would have liked if you had met them. They were capable of love and sacrifice, and, so far as the treatment of their fellow-believers went, were models to us all. Each side, however, was convinced that it alone held the key to salvation and that the other side wished to rob mankind of that key. Naturally, they then became devotees of a cause, and they made room for the cause by getting rid of a good many of the principles of Christianity. Good men began to apologise for persecution, intolerance, and a number of other things discommended in the Sermon on the Mount. It would not have been so bad if only the men at the head of affairs had killed and tortured people who disagreed with them about transubstantiation and salvation by faith. Men at the head of affairs, even of religious affairs, are often politicians rather than saints—worshippers of power, like any dictator. The tragedy of the situation lay in the fact that ordinary kindly

Christian men and women acquiesced in and even approved of the persecution of their fellow-Christians. They believed that the end was a good one, and that it was right to use unprincipled means towards that end. They did not say to themselves: "Murder is a sin in the sight of God," or "Torture is a sin in the sight of God," and throw over their leaders as enemies of Christianity. Had the good men of both sides united—united if only in an agreement to disagree and in the condemnation of crimes by whichever side committed—we should, I fancy, have had a Europe better worth living in than the Europe of to-day.

I grew up in a part of the world in which the last embers of the religious wars were still glowing, and I heard good men and women on each side commending everything that was done on their own side or blaming the other side for its occurrence. There were as good men on the one side as on the other, and with how little principle some of them tolerated intolerance! The cause was supposed to justify everything and a city that might have hummed with happiness was again and again plunged by as good-hearted a people as are to be found on earth, into bitterness.

It is not only in religious matters, however, that good men make excuses for crimes committed on behalf of a cause. Immorality of this kind is almost universal. I once asked a friend what was the difference between Nazi atrocities and Russian atrocities. He, being a Communist, said: "The difference is that the Russian atrocities are committed on the right side." This seems to imply that atrocities are not to be condemned in themselves, but only when they have a Nazi origin. Yet it is always as atrocities that we are asked to condemn them, and one of the leading charges against the Nazis is that they do commit appalling atrocities. How can we reasonably condemn the Nazis for committing atrocities, however, if we admit that atrocities are in many circumstances justifiable? Cruelty cannot change from a virtue into a vice by crossing a frontier. Yet many people talk as though this were the most natural happening in the world.

One would have thought that it should be fairly simple for the good people of the world to agree on a few things, such as that cruelty is vile and that to rob human beings or a nation of liberty is atrocious. Yet even the good people who will agree to these things in theory will begin to make reservations as soon as the cause to which they are devoted becomes associated with crime. Six months ago, no one would have believed that by the end of the year English Communists would be found defending Russia for making a pact which enabled Germany temporarily to destroy the Polish Republic and for afterwards setting out herself to destroy the Finnish Republic. To do them justice, the English Communists were at first profoundly shocked—not, perhaps, by the Russian pact, but at least by the Nazi invasion of Poland. Being as good men and women as their neighbours, they instinctively realised that evil was on the march—that one of the crimes that are stumbling-blocks to the progress of mankind was being perpetrated. Then came a sudden change of face. They remembered that though Germany is Imperialist, England and France are also Imperialist and, since Russia (in spite of her display of Swastikas in honour of Herr von Ribbentrop) was neutral they decided that this was not a Polish war but a capitalist and Imperialist war. I should have thought that on broad human principles a capitalist or Imperialist who wanted to prevent a man from being murdered was preferable to a capitalist or Imperialist who was murdering a man. Then came the Russian demands on Finland. Here, as far as principle was concerned, was a fairly clear issue. During the Spanish Civil War the Communists had committed themselves enthusiastically to the principle of national independence. If Russia threatened Finnish independence, therefore, all those who supported a free Spain would naturally be expected to support Finland. But no. Wrong becomes right when Stalin does it. He is the sacred leader of a sacred cause, and, if he behaves in Finland as every Communist would condemn England for behaving in Ireland, this is all right because it is done under the sign of the hammer and sickle. I sometimes wonder to what lengths Stalin could go without losing the confidence of the good men and women who believe in him. Would they object if he persecuted the Jews? Or if he restored capitalism? Or if he turned Christian and compelled everybody to go to church? At present, he seems to have a free hand from his followers to do what he likes. He is now in all but name an emperor, applauded by thousands of good men and women who do not believe in emperors. He has betrayed them, but they will not betray him. What a waste of goodness, so badly needed for the salvaging of the world! There is unfortunately nothing new in this. It was always so in a planet in which good men become men of no principle through blind devotion to a cause. Y. Y.

Miscellany

A NAZI CATECHISM

An Instruction to be learned of Every German, before he be permitted to die for the Führer.

Q.—What is your name?

A.—Adolf—or Hermann.

Q.—Who gave you this name?

A.—My beloved *Führer*—or His Deputy, when I was made a Party Member, and an inheritor of Greater Aryan Germany.

Q.—What did the *Führer*—or his Deputy—then for you?

A.—He did promise and vow three things in my name. First, that I should denounce the Jew and all his works, the decencies and kindnesses of decadent democratic civilisations, and all the loathsome freedom of independent thought. Second, that I should keep all the Rules of the National Socialist Party. And, thirdly, that I should keep the *Führer's* holy will and commandments, and march in the same all the days of my life.

Q.—What dost thou chiefly learn in the Articles of thy Belief?

A.—First, I learn to believe in the *Führer*, who created me and the whole Nazi Party.

Second, in Hitler, who redeemed me and all Germany from the Iniquities of the Treaty of Versailles.

Thirdly, in Adolf, who embodies me and all the Party.

Q.—But what dost thou chiefly learn?

A.—My duty towards my *Führer*, and my duty towards my Neighbour.

Q.—What is thy duty towards thy *Führer*?

A.—My duty towards my *Führer* is to believe in him, to fear him, and to love him, with all my heart and all my soul and all my strength; to hear all his speeches, to learn by heart *Mein Kampf* (ignoring its inconsistencies, irrelevancies, hysteria and imbecilities), to serve him truly, to starve for him, and to die for him.

Q.—What is thy duty towards thy Neighbour?

A.—Unless he be a Member of the Party (and frequently also if he is), to spy upon him, to inform against him, and to maltreat him. If he be a Jew, to imprison him, torture him, scourge, revile, and murder him. If he be a Pole, a Czech, or an Austrian, to steal his goods, invade his land, and enslave his person. If he be a native of the Western Democracies, to loathe him, despise him, and finally to conquer him in the name of *Lebensraum* and Greater Aryan Germany.

It is also my duty to order myself lowly and reverently to all my Superiors in the Party; at their command to torture by word and deed; to lie and to defraud; to bear hatred and malice; to turn my hands to beating and outrage, and my tongue to evil-speaking, lying, and propaganda; to keep my body in a Brown Uniform, and in Health through Joy; to covet and desire the living-space of other nations, and to do my damnedest in those Wars to which it shall please the *Führer* to send me.

Q.—What is the outward visible sign of the Party?

A.—The Swastika Flag, and the Uplifted Arm of the *Führer*.

Q.—What is the inward spiritual grace of the Party?

A.—The death of the Jew, and the birth of a new Aryan Germany.

Q.—What is required of Persons desirous of joining the Party?

A.—Renunciation of the Individual, and Faith in the *Führer*.

Q.—Why then are children enrolled?

A.—Because the *Führer* speaks for them (as indeed for all), and the unformed mind cannot too early be corrupted.

The Gauleiter *of every* Gau *shall diligently, upon Party Festivals and other holy days, behind barbed wire and in a Concentration Camp, examine so many children as can conveniently be dragged from their parents by the* Gestapo, *in some part of this Catechism.*

ASTYANAX

CAROL

MARY my mate is a young fair maiden.
I am an old man, with years laden.

I am wed to Mary: she makes no good cheer.
She does not smile to me when I am near.

Mary does not dance for me: she does not sing.
I am an old man, and ask no thing.

Mary has a secret mouth: her eyes look down;
She makes no talk with the women of the town.

By day I toil: by night my couch I seek.
I am an old man—who am I to speak?

Mary would in summer have apricots and cherries;
In autumn I bring her the wild hedge berries.

Now in the winter, she would have an ass.
Out of the city by night we pass.

A tale I know, the strangest since the world began.
Why should I marvel, I an old man?

G. DE VAVASOUR

THE THEATRE IN WARTIME

IN the first week of the war every theatre and every cinema in the country was closed. Consequently every single member of an entire profession, together with all technicians, clerical workers, and attendants, suffered total loss of work. The Government had, on plea of public safety, proclaimed a national lock-out. The situation was the more severe because the actor's working-life is a week-to-week business in any case. Very few have long contracts guaranteeing salaries in non-working weeks. Payment ceases when work ceases. Acts of God (or Hitler) are no business of the employers. The various refuges of the "resting" actor were closed. Film-studios were idle. Television had been immediately suspended. The B.B.C. programme was limited to one station. The only surviving employment was that of a team of radio favourites who were drafted off to some Hogsnorton with an immensity of hush-hush and very poor results for listeners. For 99 per cent. of the profession and its subsidiary workers there were, in the first week of September, no work, no pay, and small prospect of either except as camp-followers later on, singing for their supper in garrison theatres.

The Government, since the whole of its plans for civil and administrative evacuation were based on the prospect of intense and immediate air-warfare, could logically do nothing else. The business of actors is to provoke crowding in public places; the Government's policy was, naturally, the exact opposite. Gradually, as an astonished nation found itself living fairly normally beneath still unmenacing skies, the lock-out was abandoned; bolts were lifted, and stages relit. London, however, remained a danger zone and so, at first, the provinces scored. All the best London productions were whisked out on tour and one result of the war was to give the British playgoer (as opposed to the Londoner) a far better view of British acting than he had had for a generation. Simultaneously on tour were Mr. John Gielgud with Miss Edith Evans, and a virtually all-star cast in his brilliant production of *The Importance of Being Earnest*, the "Old Vic" in Shakespeare, Shaw, and Goldsmith with Mr. Robert Donat and Miss Constance Cummings, the Vic-Wells Ballet, Miss Diana Wynyard in Noel Coward's *Design for Living*, Miss Yvonne Arnaud in James Bridie's latest play, a Cochran revue, a Beatrice Lillie revue, and nearly all the West End favourites of the time. Mr. Gielgud incidentally, hungry for more work than the part of John Worthing could yield to his ardent spirit, gave up his provincial Sunday afternoons to lecturing on "Shakespeare in Peace and War," with abundant and brilliant recitation of relevant passages, in aid of war-charities. His appeal, or his appeal on top of Shakespeare's, filled big theatres on wet Sunday afternoons with audiences passionate to hear an alone-standing figure in a black suit. This still young actor's influence is becoming enormous, comparable to that of the great Victorians, Irving, Bancroft, and others, but achieved in a far less flamboyant way.

The war then tilted the balance of the British theatre in the country's favour, and the country, conscious of its opportunity, showed its appreciation by providing extremely full houses. The balance will be tilted back again, assuming the same wartime conditions and skies comparatively serene, when the leading players return to London. But business in the provinces has been quite good enough to remind any Londoners who had forgotten the fact, that the drama still has a broad national plinth as well as a metropolitan elegance on top. Such a reminder is all to the good of the theatre.

London started more slowly, owing to the caution of the Home Office, and more timidly, owing to the nervousness of managements. It is easy to censure their nervousness, but the provincial tourists were taking out productions already in being and needing no further capital. New London productions needed fresh capitalisation, while a single air raid might end their chances in an hour. The vote, accordingly, was for levity. The smart little revues, Mr. Farjeon's and the Gate, were re-edited. The Palladium and Hippodrome became the obvious popular goal of men on leave. There was a flow of little comedies, preferably with a plain titular intimation that sex would rear its pretty head. Delysia, without whose coaxing and consoling presence our twentieth-century wars would appear to be unendurable and even unthinkable in the neighbourhood of Shaftesbury Avenue, appeared triumphantly in a piece called *French for Love*.

Only the Westminster Theatre resolved to sustain its standards and to proceed upon the assumption that black-outs do not apply to all faculties of thought and sensibility. It staged an improved version of Mr. Priestley's Malvern play of 1938, *Music at Night*, and discovered an audience so obstinately grateful for the compliment of being taken seriously that the piece ran far beyond expectation. Now there is likely to be a general recovery of "mental morale." The Embassy, with its modern-dress *Julius Caesar* and the new Actors' Theatre at the Rudolf Steiner Hall, have attracted quite enough attention to justify further returns to normal standards.

So unemployment has gradually decreased from the 99 per cent. of early September. Equity has formulated plans for Actors' Companies, but they are not yet in being. That would be a mild essay in Syndicalism and actors are not adventurous as a rule. On the other hand a certain amount of financial readjustment has been made. Most of the ventures, in and out of London, are dispensing with the burden of star salaries, which are often far too heavy and lack box-office

justification. A guaranteed minimum wage with profit-sharing according to rank has been substituted. This enables a bad start or a bad week to be weathered. Such a levelling process and the co-operative sentiment which it evokes have long been needed.

"Ensa," established at Drury Lane with Sir Seymour Hicks and Mr. Basil Dean in command, is now supplying another and rapidly growing outlet for actors and performers of all kinds. It began by organising concert-parties for troops, because these could be most rapidly assembled, rehearsed, and despatched, and is now getting on with the business of sending out popular plays to the special garrison theatres which are being built at home and overseas. "Ensa" had to start from scratch in September and so far it has had to think in terms of quantity and speed. There have been sharp criticisms of the third-rate quality of the concert-party fun and one R.A.F. centre, wearied of these visitations, arranged with the Westminster Theatre for a week-end of serious play-acting in its hangar-theatre. The report that Ridgeway's Late Joys, a constant pleasure of the capital, were not accepted for foreign service because "too highbrow" is, if true, alarming. This sort of thing is forty years out of date. "Ensa" must really not assume that the British forces of to-day consist of the mythical Tommy Atkins and the Kiplingite toughs of the Victorian "regulars." On the other hand, it is to be praised for several things. It is strictly professional, combats the nuisance of amateur entertainers who force themselves on the troops and queer the professional pitch, and everywhere observes the Esher Standard Contract, which has hitherto been operative only in London. By the summer it hopes to have twenty play-companies on the road as well as its numerous concert-parties, vaudeville groups, and cinema units. That will further mitigate the still severe hardships of theatrical unemployment.

IVOR BROWN

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"Mandragola," at the Mercury

It was an excellent idea of Mr. Ashley Dukes to paraphrase for the English stage, in some respects so much less sophisticated than that of Renaissance Florence, Machiavelli's brilliant, cynical comedy *Mandragola*, which Macaulay puts above the best of Goldoni and only below the best of Molière, and for which Voltaire would have given all the comedies of Aristophanes. But Mr. Ashley Dukes is too modest as to his share in this entertaining production, which should bear as sub-title "Variations on a theme by Machiavelli." Partly in anticipation of the censor's scissors, and partly, no doubt, because he knew that no English actor, except Robert Farquharson, could be found to interpret the ethos of Machiavelli's Renaissance Florence, he has freely adapted the dashing Florentine garment, taking-in here and letting-out there; and he has done it very skilfully, and in lively English. He has expanded, for instance, a whole female character and two love-scenes out of the delicate little speech in which the lover Callimaco soliloquises after his night with Lucrezia, supposedly to absorb the poison of the mandrake-potion which was to make her fruitful. He correspondingly, alas, curtails the fascinating monologues of the cynical confessor, Frate Timoteo, which are among the best things in the original. Pope Leo X was less squeamish; indeed, he ordered a theatre to be specially built for the performance of this comedy. But it is too highly spiced for a Puritan world whose civilisation is going up in blood and thunder. The part of Nicia, the foolish old husband of the virtuous Lucrezia, is left intact, except in one place where he is made a trifle too intelligent. This rich comedy part was excellently played by John Lawrie. Timoteo was also brilliantly played by Eadie Palfrey, whose appearance was astoundingly good. Ivan Brandt, as the lover Callimaco, strove in vain after a virile elegance of which the Air Force supplies more examples than the English stage. Siro, his servant, was somewhat surprisingly cast as an English yokel, but his curious style grew on one. Robert Sansom as the parasite gave a lively performance, and so did Winifred Evans as the mother-in-law. Sara Churchill looked charming as Lucrezia, but remained a modern English girl. Kara Aldri gave an engaging performance of the slight part of A Lady. The single setting by Guy Sheppard is well designed. Two lutes make the music. *Mandragola* at the Mercury is far from Machiavelli, but it is an excellent entertainment, and has a good deal more style than most plays on the London stage to-day.

"Ladies in Retirement," at the St. James's

When the year is 1885 and the scene a lonely house in the marshes, inhabited by an eccentric spinster and a ruthlessly possessive companion with two lunatic sisters, the experienced playgoer will have no difficulty in guessing what happens, especially if a large, disused oven squats ominously at the back of the stage. The expected occurs, the spinster is compulsorily retired, and Miss Mary Clare, her heart and brow as ominous as thunder, spends the rest of the play struggling with her conscience and her blackmailing rogue of a nephew. In conception the characters are strictly orthodox, and the flutterings and growlings of the loonies are as true to stage convention as the sullen lust of the hired girl is to *Cold Comfort Farm*. But dim Victorian lightings and bodies behind the brickwork can always, with the help of spirited acting, dodge the critical faculties and successfully attack the simpler emotions. Most of the cast enter into the melodramatic spirit of the occasion. Miss Clare is alarmingly powerful, Miss Margaret Watson gibbers and Miss Phyllis Morris grunts with appropriate zest, and Miss Mary Merral is so delightful as the flamboyant victim that we wish she had died hereafter; while Mr. Robert Newton, though perhaps not sufficiently rascally, is a nephew who can flirt with an aunt, steam open a letter and seduce a maid with the worst. The play is rather pretentiously dedicated "to the memory of the French prototypes who wrote it with their lives." But it's very good fun and needn't be taken quite as seriously as all that.

"Whittington, Jnr. and His Cat," at the Players' Theatre

Ridgeway's Late Joys are giving to club members a carefully Victorian pantomime for a short season ending on New Year's Day. The dialogue is conducted according to tradition with outrageous puns and excruciating rhymes, which have been excavated from two pantomimes of seventy years ago by the erudite Mr. Archie Harrardine. The Principal Boy is planturously presented by Mrs. Davey, whose costumes artfully combine tights with a hint of the bustle; her performance is a jewel. Miss Sterndale Bennett, Miss R. Atkinson and Miss Mullen also scintillate. The scenery charms, and Mr. Leonard Sachs is again to be congratulated. The Harlequinade devised by Mr. Willson Disher, the chief authority in these matters, includes a super-surrealistic song by an "Oyster Cross'd in Love." This concludes a programme which includes a series of customary ballads, and the farewell appearance of a *lieder*-singer—one of the most comic turns we have ever seen in any theatre. Whether he talks Germanically, sings Schubert or records his missionary triumphs, Mr. Ustinov is unparalleled.

"Remontons Les Champs-Elysées," at the Academy
"The Real Glory," at the Odeon
"Melody of Youth," at the London Pavilion

Sacha Guitry has devised, directed and written the script of *Remontons Les Champs-Elysées* in which he plays a number of roles and also provides an almost orchestral accompaniment to the film with a delightfully spoken and witty commentary in the style of *Le Roman d'un Tricheur*. Guitry first appears as a schoolmaster who interrupts an arithmetic lesson to tell his pupils the story of the Champs-Elysées. His version is certainly more *histoire* than history and it seems at times a rather remarkable tale to tell to the children, the angle of approach being definitely adult. The story is held together by tracing the schoolmaster's descent, very much on the wrong side of the blanket, from Louis XV, Napoleon I, Marat, and a *tricoteuse*—result a staunch republican. Guitry takes in Louis XV, Napoleon I, and Napoleon III amongst his characterisations; we are also given glimpses of Marie de Medici, Marie Antoinette, Mme. de Pompadour, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Richard Wagner, and many others equally famous. Somehow one is too much reminded of an Albert Hall pageant or of a visit to the megalomaniac section of a lunatic asylum. There are excellent but too brief performances from Mlles. Germaine Dermaz and Jacqueline Delubac, to mention only two of the accomplished cast, but *le film—c'est Guitry*.

Samuel Goldwyn has written yet another new page in history, this time American history. In *The Real Glory*, the year is 1907, the scene Fort Mysang, a small Philippine Island, and the style

familiar Goldwynese at its best and most exciting. The film opens with a first-class raid, rapine, and murder and never lets down for a moment. The Moros, a fierce jungle tribe, plan to exterminate the Christian Filipinos of Fort Mysang when the American Army quits the island, but they reckon without a handful of officers including David Niven and an Army doctor Gary Cooper, who have been left behind to teach the Filipinos self-defence. The Moros send into the camp "juramentados" (men sworn to kill a Christian) to bump off the officers one by one and eventually succeed in luring a force into the jungle while they attack the camp. Andrea Leeds, who has somehow wandered onto the Island, puts up some good defence work until Gary Cooper gets back from the jungle and saves the day with a candle. David Niven dies pleasantly and quietly. No one will mind that the Moro chieftain looks like the Djinn in an Aladdin pantomime, or that there is a strong atmosphere of improbability; the fun is altogether much too good, and the final scenes are a riot of excitement. With Gary Cooper at his most attractive, David Niven and Andrea Leeds looking charming, the film is recommended to adolescents of all ages.

Melody of Youth finds Samuel Goldwyn, in a different mood, presenting, for the first time on the screen, Jascha Heifetz. He is introduced into a story about a tough little boy called Frankie who goes to a concert by mistake and hears him play Mendelssohn's violin Concerto in E minor which effects a profound change in the boy's character. Frankie gets taken into a free school to learn the violin, displays remarkable talent, and joins the school orchestra: which allows the film to introduce the Peter Meremblum California Junior Symphony Orchestra, whose proficiency is quite remarkable, and a coloratura singer who looks no more than nine and who just manages to sing *Caro Nome* from *Rigoletto* (a rather nerve-racking performance). Heifetz, of course, saves the school from bankruptcy by appearing at the school concert. Heifetz is a very fine violinist who can be heard to great advantage in the film, the sound reproduction being excellent (though the microphone does rather overemphasise the violin in the orchestral numbers). As well as the Mendelssohn concerto he plays Saint Saëns' *Rondo Capriccioso*, Tchaikowsky's *Melody* and several more bits and pieces (on the whole, a rather tea-time selection). The cast includes Andrea Leeds, Joel McCrea, and Gene Reynolds who, as Frankie, gives a talented, not to say exciting, performance. The production is light, amusing, and rather sentimental, and will appeal to a wide public.

THE COMING WEEK

FRIDAY, December 22nd—
West African Students' Union Dance in aid of Red Cross Fund, Gatti's Restaurant, Strand, 8.
"Where the Rainbow Ends," Holborn Empire; matinees only.
"Haw-Haw," Holborn Empire.
"You of All People," Apollo.
"Georgian Springtime," Embassy.

SATURDAY, December 23rd—
Carols, Holy Trinity Church, St. Marylebone, 3.
"Design for Living," Savoy.

TUESDAY, December 26th—
"Chester Nativity Play" and "Gammer Gurton's Needle," Torch.
"Cinderella," Coliseum.
Ballet at Sadler's Wells.
"Somewhere in England," Lyric.

FRIDAY, December 29th—
Civil Liberties and Artists International Assoc. New Year Fancy Dress Dance and Cabaret. "Low" will present prizes. Westminster Palace Rooms, 8.30. Tickets 4s.

Correspondence

FRENCH OPINION

SIR,—I should like to point out that M. Wladimir d'Ormesson's article in the *Figaro*, which you mentioned last week, is not the only or indeed the most outstanding exception in France to the official reluctance to discuss constructive peace aims at this juncture. The Christian Democratic papers, *l'Aube* and *Le Temps Present*, and the organs of the two Christian Democratic Parties in the Chamber, the *Petit Démocrate* and *La Jeune République*, have been waging a consistent campaign for European federation since the outbreak of the war, and recently a whole issue of *Les Cahiers Nouveaux*, with the co-operation of such eminent writers as M. Jacques Maritain, M. Georges Bidault, M. Georges Scelle (Professor of International Law at the Sorbonne) and M. Gaston Tessier (Secretary General of the Confederation of Christian Trade Unions), has been devoted to a study of the question from every angle.

It should be noted that the Popular Democratic Party, which runs the *Petit Démocrate*, is the party of the Deputy Foreign Secretary, M. Champetier de Ribes and of the Vice President of the Commission of Foreign Affairs, M. Pézet, so that the ideas of the movement are represented in high quarters.

The People and Freedom Group, 35 Campden Street, W.8. BARBARA BARCLAY CARTER, Hon. Secretary.

SIR,—Your "two Holborn Councillors," in your December 9th issue, have two very serious shortcomings: (*a*) their memory is surprisingly poor, (*b*) they are unaware that France is *at war*.

First, regarding the treatment of French Communists, they have forgotten that the French Communist Party was really not French at all, but Moscow-led and Moscow-financed. Perhaps they remember what happened once during Blum's first Popular Front Government. The Chamber of Deputies was unable to vote on a Government Bill because instructions from Stalin had not yet reached the Communist group. The meeting had to be suspended while Thorez telephoned Stalin to ask for permission to vote for the Government. Now Marty, another Communist leader, is in Soviet Russia, and Thorez, a deserter from the French Army, God knows where. That is how the Communist Party understood its duties to France. In the light of reality, it is highly amusing to hear your correspondents speak of the Communist "Anti-War Policy." Finland has recently discovered how Stalin understands hatred of war. All this shows that the Communist leaders were traitors to their country and had to be dealt with accordingly.

Secondly, regarding the treatment of the working class as a whole, any decent member of it would reply something like this: When a country is in danger of losing its independence, and four or five millions of its manhood are under the flags to defend it, earning practically no money at all, those who remain in their homes and continue to earn a living, make a point not to grumble if certain inevitable sacrifices are demanded of them. They even tend to look upon themselves as privileged persons. Moreover, they are impudent enough to realise that there is a difference between working overtime at a reduced rate of pay and giving one's life. Many of them happen to have fought in the last war, and to have learnt the value of life. Instead of bleating about their rights as human beings, they simply do their duty. They understand that Right is something to be fought for before it is enjoyed, and that it has no value if it does not carry a Duty with it. At least in this wretched world, if not in Utopia. But the word "Duty" probably rings unpleasantly in the ears of our two friends. Let them fight for Democracy at home while others fight for it at the Front.

HENRI EVANS
11 Rue des Halles,
Paris I.

THE INVASION OF FINLAND

SIR,—As a Finn, I am of course interested to see the Dean of Canterbury carving up the Body and Blood of my Country into three neat Sacraments for Russian consumption "*in return for compensation.*" Would the Dean be willing to carve up for German consumption, on those terms, his cathedral and his very small county of Kent, even? Were he not willing, I (as a Finn) should not dream of dubbing him "unreasonable."

It is known to the whole world that our government was willing to negotiate—*even* after our country had been invaded. Our government was *not* willing to surrender the keys of our independent existence, our democratic constitution or our religion. The Dean will not find a Finn (or a person of integrity anywhere) to take his view that an "honest statement" by Russia ("We Russians intend to murder you Finns and steal what doesn't belong to us—unless we get our way") "would at least have commanded respect." *Respect!*

And what, I wonder, does Mr. Hunter of Glasgow know of "the history of Finland and its present rulers and the character of its present Government"?

As a nation of 3.8 millions (rather less than the population of many cities), we cannot expect to be intimately known to the citizens of Great Britain; but we are not happy when they tell lies about us. If any British citizen really holds the idea that we care a damn whether Russians profess the Shamanism of

Siberia (see Zelenin of Leningrad) or the Communism of Stalin, they are profoundly mistaken. Murder, for us, has not the face of Castlereagh—but of those who oppressed us for (only) one hundred and eight years. It was quite long enough.

"VIRTANEIMI"

A SUGGESTION

SIR,—Is not the time now ripe for Sir Samuel Hoare and M. Laval to get together and produce a pact giving half Finland to the U.S.S.R.? BELEAGUERED

ENTERTAINMENT AND CULTURE

SIR,—Mr. W. J. Turner, whose admirable article appeared in your last week's issue, might have predicted a less ephemeral future for the Art and Entertainment Emergency Council had he been present at its inaugural meeting, at the National Gallery.

First, he would have learned that we have the support of nearly all the leading professional organisations; this unanimity of purpose is something which has never before been evident in the art and entertainment professions, and indeed the ministerial officials, who were approached when the idea was first propagated, declared with governmental conviction that it could not possibly be achieved.

Secondly, Mr. Turner would have learned that cultural education is in the forefront of our programme of activities, and that we have been promised the active co-operation of many educational bodies whose Delegates attended our inaugural meeting, and will participate in our future deliberations.

We believe that many members of the art and entertainment professions would revolt from the setting up of anything in the nature of a Ministry of Fine Arts with its attendant threats of State interference and control. At the same time, we realise that the fostering and preservation of British culture is a task impossible of complete fulfilment without the assistance of a Government Grant. The only way we can obtain this is by stimulating a public demand for it.

We propose therefore to try out a test scheme in one typical reception area. It will entail the engagement of a team of teachers, expert in the various aspects of cultural education, and the holding of a festival of music, drama, ballet, films, variety and art exhibitions. Our success will be dependent on the sympathy of the enlightened press and the generosity of private donors.

Art and Entertainment Emergency Council,
4 Bedford Square, W.C.1.

GILES PLAYFAIR
Chairman of the Provisional Committee

THE LAST DAYS OF MADRID

SIR,—Colonel Casado's *The Last Days of Madrid* is a first-hand account of the views and doings of one of the chief actors in the Spanish tragedy. I hope that this book will evoke a suitable reply from those it so vehemently—and in my view unfairly—attacks. To make this reply is not the object of this letter, which is merely to give supplementary information on certain details. Unless accurate records of these tragic days are made now, they will be lost to the future historian, and errors in apparently insignificant details may later lead to important errors in interpretation.

I was a member of the "Commission sent by the International Committee of Co-ordination," to which Casado refers in the last 40 pages. We landed in Valencia in the small hours of March 27th. The following night we embarked 367 republicans on the ship in which we had brought food to Spain, and sent them off to safety. They were selected by unanimous agreement between the leaders of all the republican parties in Valencia, who drew up the lists in the presence of our delegates. We had a number of other ships chartered and awaiting instructions in French Mediterranean ports. Owing to the suddenness of the collapse of the Casado front and a number of unfortunate circumstances, the first boat-load and 179 other refugees taken off by British warships at Gandia were all we could save. One of the unfortunate circumstances was undoubtedly the ill-will of the consular authorities to which Casado refers. This ill-will caused a number (some tens, but just how many I don't know) of refugees to leave Gandia and press on to their doom along the road to Alicante, and it caused a delay of twelve to eighteen hours. Without this delay we should very likely have been able to obtain naval assistance for the embarkation at Alicante, and save the 4,000 republicans gathered on the docks there. Months afterwards I met one of the tiny number that managed to escape from there, and he described the horrors of those days and nights of fear and hope gradually changing to despair. When, finally, a Franco warship appeared, and after it, like a mockery, our helpless ships, over a hundred of the refugees committed suicide by drowning or cutting their veins on the jagged edges of opened tins. To quote one of the English members of our delegation: "We saved a little under 600 people. With the benevolent or even the strict neutrality of the British and French authorities we could have saved 6,000. With their active help 60,000 could have been saved."

To turn now to certain points in Casado's account of the last three days. He writes (p. 255) that on arrival at Valencia on the afternoon of the 28th he "was agreeably surprised by the presence in Valencia of a Commission sent by the International Committee of Co-ordination." I find this surprise difficult to understand because I was present on the previous evening (in Albacete, where three of us spent the night on our way to try to reach Madrid) when the chairman of our delegation telephoned to Casado and arranged for us to meet him on the following morning. Early on that morning, however, he sent word that communications between Albacete and Madrid were cut and that he was coming to Valencia. At our first meeting with him that afternoon, the 28th, he did not, as he writes in his book, tell us that we might have three days. He was self-confident, and told us we probably had twenty-five or thirty days, since, he explained, while Franco had rejected his plan of surrender, he was actually moving according to it (or even more slowly). Casado also told us at this meeting that he had ships for some 10,000 refugees. There is no doubt of this because I remember agreeing with one of my colleagues as we left the room that this was good news indeed, although it made our efforts seem almost redundant. Later the same evening Casado called us again and this time he said he thought we should have a week, but it might be only three days or—with a shrug—even only twenty-four hours. When pressed about the ships he made it plain that he had none. Apparently he had earlier referred to an optimistic view of the capacity of *our* ships. Next morning at 7.30 he sent for us, and said he was surrendering the town in a few minutes.

Casado explains in his book that he did not wish to tell us too much about the situation at the fronts "because I did not know whether these (the delegates) were genuinely anti-Fascist enough to hear of the chaotic conditions of our army" (p. 256). I find it difficult to believe this unflattering explanation. The Committee of Co-ordination had given too much and too prolonged evidence of anti-Fascism. Later (p. 257) Casado says: "There were some foreign Communists among the members of this Committee. . . ." It would seem probable that a Spain committee with Communist members was anti-Fascist. Casado's use of the word "foreign" is curious, and throws light on his prejudices. The Communist members were certainly foreign. So were we all. (Six of us were French, three English, one American, and one a Finlander. Three of the French and one Englishman were Communists).

One modification in emphasis rather than fact I should like to record. On page 265 *et seq*, Casado gives an account of events at Gandia. He twice mentions Senator Forcinal, our French chairman, and readers will, I imagine, gather that the difficult negotiations and arrangements were in that gentleman's hands. In fact, although Forcinal played his part and all that Casado says of him is true, it was an English member of the delegation that took the initiative and led this part of the proceedings, as it was an English cruiser that took off the refugees. I suspect that this English member wishes to remain anonymous, and I will omit his name. But it is history we are trying to establish, and there is no doubt that the Gandia embarkation was an English affair both in its good and its bad aspects.

Finally, one word about the *Galatea*. A man-of-war is not equipped with hotel space, and although Casado did spend the first night on deck with his comrades, I feel sure the authorities on the ship thought this was in accord with his wishes. They did not know he was ill. With the exception of one stupid little incident, when a clumsy apparatus was set in motion to disarm a late arrival among the Spanish officers, the officers and the crew treated us all, refugees and delegates, with great courtesy and friendliness. The interminable hours in the port are, I feel sure, lightened in the memory of most of us by that kindness, and I am glad that an opportunity has arisen to pay public tribute to the hospitality of the *Galatea*.

Reading Casado's self-justification confirms me in the view I formed of him and his role at the time. I do not believe he was

the Machiavellian instrument of pseudo-democratic governments. I do believe he was a wishful thinker with grandiose sentiments and exalted ideas about himself. LAURIN FILLIACUS

KRIVITSKY

SIR,—Critic suggests that parts of the sensational *I was Stalin's Agent* story by W. G. Krivitsky are "only credible because the people whose deaths are described are in fact dead and because they died in circumstances which can be checked up."

It is to be hoped that the general narrative stands on firmer ground than on assertions like "young Smillie, son of the famous British labour leader, died in an Ogpu gaol."

Robert Ramsay Smillie was, in fact, the grandson of Robert Smillie, the miners' leader, and the son of Alex Smillie. In the confusion which followed the 1937 May Days in Barcelona he was arrested at Figueras, near the French-Catalan frontier. He was brought to the Torres in Valencia and was then imprisoned in the Carcel Modelo on the outskirts of that city. Before his case could be completely examined and his full innocence established he fell ill and was removed to the Hospital Provincial in the city, where he died of acute peritonitis. He was buried under his full name in the Cemeterio Municipal outside the town.

The tragic death of young Bob Smillie cut short a promising career, but this is no ground for sensationalising the manner of his going. DAVID MURRAY

70 Westbourne Terrace, Paddington, W.2.

CHARLES RICKETTS

SIR,—In a review by Mr. Raymond Mortimer under the above title of the fascinating excerpts from Charles Ricketts's Diaries and Letters I find, among many disputable statements, this :—

> "He stood champion," a friend of mine writes, "of Italy, Greece and Egypt, when such men as Tonks and MacColl were turning their eyes to Zorn and Sargent.

You must allow me to protest against misinformed gossip so irresponsibly retailed. Tonks was an intimate friend of Sargent, but his severe critic : Zorn I never heard him mention. Italian art took the place possible to it in my accounts of current exhibitions, as inevitably and deservedly, did Sargent in notices of the Academy. Zorn I remember at Axel Haig's table in the 'seventies along with a flight of Scandinavian painters on their first passage to Paris. He had with him a portfolio of brilliant watercolours ; I praised, in print, his etching of Ernest Renan, but little else. Neither man was among my idols. Had I written other books on my own initiative, the first would have been on Donatello and Mantegna, but I have always had a lazy pen. I did, however, to please Ricketts contribute a paper on Giulio Campagnola to *The Pageant* of 1897, of which Shannon was Art Editor, and disturbed thereby a jealously guarded summer of painting.

But enough on the personal point. Ricketts had a range and particularity of knowledge in the arts to which I have no pretension. Beside him other connoisseurs in this country were amateurs, and the only "sadness" in his gay story was for us, in his refusal to stand for the Directorship of the National Gallery. He dreaded having to do with Trustees, not realising that in face of conviction and learning such as his those ignorant sticklers would have been as straw in the wind or the fire.

In his own production, not on painting but on wood-engaving will the highlight lastingly shine. Mannered as they are, the illustrations to *Daphnis and Chloe* better their prototypes in the *Hypnerotomachia*, and are in a different world of design from the mudpies in paint of our friend Roger Fry.

Ricketts, as a critic, became only too "Catholic" in his latter days ; like all of us, he had his blind spots : but he had a first-rate and first-hand organ of vision ; his judgments were both penetrating and circumspect, and his estimate of Cézanne, and of Renoir, for whom, on due occasion he had an enthusiastic but discriminating admiration, are more likely to be those of the future than the exaggerated views which Mr. Mortimer has adopted. D. S. MACCOLL

[Mr. Mortimer writes : I apologise for my unfortunate mistake about Mr. MacColl's past, and I am interested to learn that Charles Ricketts eventually became too catholic in his tastes. It is a defect in *Self-Portrait* that it contains no hint of this fact. Indeed, in a letter written only eight years ago he was rejoicing at the decrease which, for some odd reason, he thought he perceived in the reputation of Cézanne and his followers. Here is his estimate of Cézanne in *Pages on Art* : "To me his pictures seem mere accumulations of thick pigment, applied to hack subjects designed in the style of our 'Proto-Byzantine' pavement-artists ; they lack only the written appeal, 'Remember the Artist.'" Mr. MacColl may think that this estimate of Cézanne is more just than my exaggerated admiration, but I can regard it only as a warning to all of us who attempt the criticism of art.—ED. *N.S. & N.*]

THE TRUSTEE

SIR,—My notice has been drawn to some verses by Sagittarius entitled "The Trustee."

Two lines read :

> No subject learns at Mission schools
> What exploitation means.

The following is a translation of our First Catechism, Chapter I, Question 8.

> Q. What does ignorance of God lead to ?
> A. It leads to misery ; for those in authority oppress those under their authority, leading to wretchedness by reason of many customs which do not help them.

Ng'iya, P.O. Yala, Kisumu, Kenya. W. E. OWEN, Archdeacon of Kavirondo, Kenya Colony.

"MRS. MINIVER"

SIR,—I am afraid I must plead guilty to a slight deception. When I saw the announcement of your competition No. 512, I felt pretty sure that I could write a far crueller satire on "Mrs. Miniver" than could any of my detractors. I therefore tried my hand at it, and sent in the result over the name of my friend, Miss K. Watkins. As I seem to have succeeded beyond my wildest hopes, and as my close connection with Mrs. Miniver precludes me from accepting the prize, I have no choice but to reveal myself.

Would you be so good as to send the prize to the competitor who was next in order of merit—or, if you prefer it, to the Association for the Relief of Distressed Gentlewomen ?

17 Halsey Street, S.W.3. JAN STRUTHER

HUNTING

SIR,—As you know, the Minister of Agriculture has advised poultry farmers and pig keepers that their normal requirements of imported feeding stuffs is likely to be reduced by at least one-third, and already many of us are experiencing difficulty in getting adequate supplies. In these circumstances it seems to me reasonable to suggest that hunting and racing should be suspended for the war period and the oats at present feeding hunters and racehorses made available for more essential purposes.

Egerton, Ashford, Kent. N. W. WITHERS

EMPLOYMENT IN WARTIME

SIR,—I read your correspondent R. G.'s article with much interest and sympathy.

In my own case, foreseeing that war would mean an immediate termination of my own job, I began enrolling in various forms of National Service last January ; and only brought these efforts to a comparatively successful conclusion at the end of November.

It is worth noting that in the original National Service Handbook one was urged *not to apply for more than one form of National Service*. I find that I have applied for no fewer than thirteen forms of National Service, and despite sympathetic letters and recommendations from one present and one ex-Cabinet Minister, and from a prominent independent M.P., it took me over ten months' hard work to get a job—at less wages than are, I understand, earned at present by junior single workers in a munitions factory.

Before securing my present post my nearest approach to success was with the local A.R.P. authorities. Enormous placards decorated the Town Hall appealing for full-time paid workers and on enrolment I was assured that within a week I should be called up for duty. At the end of that period I was asked to get in touch with the local authorities immediately by phone and the following conversation took place.

Local Official : "What are you in your present job—a clerk ?"

Self : "Well—no. I'm one of the managers."

Official : "You're the manager and you expect us to give you a job at £3 per week—not likely."

And despite my informing him with some blasphemy that whatever my present job, I was losing it and with it almost my entire income at the end of the week, that was all the satisfaction I could get.

On one point I must correct your correspondent. It is not necessary to enrol in the Central Register to secure Government employment even for those without special backing. R. A.

Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

WE reviewers are a deplorable crew. As we no longer are unanimous, nobody now listens to what we say; and, what is more, our envious attacks on successful writers do a great deal of damage. Mrs. Woolf has just published a pamphlet suggesting our retirement into the consulting-room, and now Mr. Swinnerton weighs in with nothing less than a Memorial Lecture retailing our iniquities. He reviews regularly himself and so wishes not to abolish reviewers but to re-establish their authority. He summarises his experience and opinions in *The Reviewing and Criticism of Books* (The Ninth Dent Memorial Lecture, Dent, 1*s.* 6*d.*). Everyone will agree that the readers of a review want to know, first of all, what the book is about and whether it is a book they would like to read. Again, who will deny that intelligence in reviewing is not enough? "It must be supported by imagination . . . by taste, by humour, detachment, experience of books and men, and tolerance." In this quotation from Mr. Swinnerton I have omitted a parenthesis; "imagination," he says, "a quality greatly lacking as a rule in the intelligentsia." Common as imagination is among lawyers, dukes, dustmen and reviewers in the Sunday newspapers, it is a quality in which those wretched highbrows are conspicuously deficient. Mr. Swinnerton, you see, has managed to unmask the real villains of the story.

* * *

Some ignorant persons have supposed that the worst feature of contemporary reviewing was the extravagant praise lavished upon innumerable books in certain journals; it has even been maliciously suggested that there was some causal connection between the extravagance of this praise and the surrounding square feet of publishers' advertisements. Mr. Swinnerton allows that there is some truth in this. He further tells us of two reviewers whose responsible employers estimate quality in the reviewer by the "quotes" they see from his reviews! But he forgets, or omits, to mention those regular reviewers who are also regular readers for publishing houses, and who write about the books produced by their firms. The "loss of authority," he concludes, in the modern review is due less to the "oft-repeated charge of venality" than to another sort of reviewing, "the worst kind of reviewing, that of ardent propaganda for a particular set or that of systematic belittlement of authors outside the set, and especially authors whose greater attractiveness has brought them wide popularity." Elsewhere in his lecture Mr. Swinnerton declares that "the spiteful reviewing of the highbrows is an abomination." It is not clear whether spiteful reviewing by middlebrows is permissible or merely non-existent; and who these highbrows are is also left in decent obscurity. It was M. André Maurois, I believe, who at first found this term of abuse rather puzzling; explanations having been eagerly offered, "I understand," he is reported to have said, "a highbrow is a person who prefers good books to bad ones." Evidently Mr. Swinnerton would not accept this definition, but whatever he may mean by a "highbrow," I do not believe that there is any paper important enough to be worth Mr. Swinnerton's attention that specialises in "ardent propaganda for a particular set." A paper run to puff a coterie would rapidly find itself with no readers outside that coterie. On the other hand, I do seem to have noticed that in one or two journals the best-selling author is not always treated with that deference to which his prosperity should entitle him. Mr. Swinnerton is downright about this—the only cause, he says, is envy. May I offer an alternative explanation? Literary editors, I believe, sometimes give to new reviewers a few tips, beginning with this: "A book that is not worth reading is not worth reviewing. So do not write about any book in which you can find little or nothing to recommend, unless elsewhere it is being taken much more seriously than it deserves." The reason for such advice is obvious: thousands of mediocre books are produced every year, about which the editor knows his readers do not want to hear. In the ordinary course these die a natural and rapid death. But occasionally one, for reasons that nobody has ever succeeded in explaining, becomes extremely popular, and its author continues with a series of equally popular and probably even more mediocre works which are enthusiastically praised in the advertisement columns and the adjacent reviews. The wicked highbrow then may allow himself a little fun. He has not space to review more than a fraction of the new books, and naturally prefers to write first about those which he thinks the best, and secondly about those which are attracting most attention. It is not envy that makes him attack successes but a sense of proportion that prevents him from ridiculing failures. To pick out for abuse, however just, one of a thousand silly books by obscure authors is invidious. But when an equally dreary performance is widely acclaimed as a masterpiece, the reviewer is entitled to expose its ineptitude. Of course when one is young one may seem to be a little snooty about books as about everything else. (As an apprentice reviewer of novels here under the ferule of Mr. Desmond MacCarthy, I was more intolerant than I should be to-day—in middle age most of us become more easy-going or more cynical.) But so long as the snootiness is not at the expense of those who need and deserve encouragement, it cannot do much harm. The interesting thing is that the larger the sales of an author, the more sensitive he usually becomes to any breath of criticism. One is reminded of *Instans Tyrannus*:

> Is one mocked by an elf,
> Is one baffled by toad or by rat?
> The gravamen's in that!

Book of the Month in England and America, serial rights sold, film-rights sold, the author continues to groan under the injustice of mankind. A highbrow has poked a little fun.

* * *

Mr. Swinnerton has interesting things to say, especially about "Star" reviewing, which I wish I had space to discuss. But there is one more point on which I wish to join issue with him. He calls Sainte-Beuve "the ideal reviewer," and intends a compliment: "When writers bewail the fact that we have no contemporary Sainte-Beuve they either forget Mr. MacCarthy or intend that some invidious comparison should be drawn." It is true that Sainte-Beuve wrote a weekly article, the peg for which was usually a new book; but I think that, unlike Mr. MacCarthy, he was by no means an ideal reviewer. Indeed, I am not sure how far he can be considered a great critic. I admire him enormously; his erudition, his skill in selecting passages for quotation from the writers of the past, his insight into character, all are beyond praise. But he seems to me a historian of literature and a biographer rather than a critic in the sense that Johnson, Hazlitt and Bradley were critics. Moreover, when he dealt with contemporary poetry or fiction, especially when this was written by his juniors, he too often showed a signal lack of imagination. (Probably Mr. Swinnerton would attribute this to his being a member of the intelligentsia?) Thus of Stendhal's novels he wrote: "I am far from blaming him for having written them," and about *Les Fleurs du Mal* he was hardly less airy; "I like," he said, "more than one piece in the volume." All critics of contemporary work are bound to make hideous mistakes—Baudelaire, incidentally, made amazingly few—but these are two instances out of many which disqualify Sainte-Beuve, I think, as "the ideal reviewer." For, as Mr. Swinnerton points out, the reviewer ought to emulate the critic in receptivity, in realising that "from a culture different from his own may come work—sometimes unwelcome—of astonishing quality." To recognise and salute new talent should indeed be the pride of the reviewer, and one of his principal objects. At least in this field, I suggest, and I could produce evidence, the deplorable highbrow is entitled to some respect. A single voice praising an author's first book matters more than a single voice laughing, even a little too heartily, at his twentieth.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

A SCIENTIFIC UTOPIAN

Dangerous Thoughts. By LANCELOT HOGBEN. *Allen and Unwin.* 8s. 6d.

Unlike *Mathematics for the Million*, which so many of us bought and so few, who were not mathematicians, finished reading, these essays are easily intelligible to the non-scientist and teach him a great deal more about mathematical and scientific method than Professor Hogben's more ambitious best-sellers. What is more, they raise the two most fundamental problems of modern democracy, the relation of science to the humanities and of "the salariat" to the State.

When Matthew Arnold wrote *Culture and Anarchy*, this country was in the throes of a social revolution which threatened to substitute for the elegant coarseness of the Whig Oligarchy, the godly vulgarity of Manchester capitalism. The middle-classes, who won power in 1832, were indeed capitalists as Marx conceived them. They despised the old order and all its works, including its culture; and if they had had their way, they would have driven the working-classes to open insurrection. What prevented this happening was the emergence of a new class and a new philosophy, the salariat which streamed from the Public Schools and Universities into the new Civil Service and the managerial posts, inspired by the philosophy of Matthew Arnold and Thomas Green. The three institutions which are the key to power in modern England, the Civil Service, the Universities and the Public Schools, were all shaped in the mould of a Classical Humanism which saw in Plato's *Republic* the final truths of statesmanship, and in the discipline of "Greats" at Oxford that general education which would make the Civil Servant, the Lawyer and the Teacher, "auxiliaries," if not philosopher kings.

Professor Hogben is in revolt against this Classical Humanism. Being an iconoclast, he naturally has no time to wonder whether in its day it had its *raison d'être:* he is concerned with present needs not with historical justifications. But, unlike most natural scientists, he fully recognises that it is not sufficient to ask for the abolition of classics and the substitution of natural science. Arnold and Green (and Plato) were perfectly right in arguing that a specialised or vocational training may equip you to be a good plumber or physicist: they will not fit you to be either a member of an oligarchy or a citizen of a democracy. The ruler and the democratic citizen need, as well as expertise, an education which enables them to tackle intelligently a problem on which they are not experts. Or put it in another way, the secret of government is the ability to give sensible orders to someone who knows more about the details than you do.

Professor Hogben therefore agrees with the purpose of the Classical Humanists: but he denies, with all the vigour and wit at his command, that Classical Humanism can achieve it in our age. He has two lines of attack. (1) Neither the classics (Greats) nor the social sciences, taught as an imitation of the Classics (Modern Greats), are any longer a general education. On the contrary, they are vocational courses for aspiring Civil Servants, lawyers and teachers, few of whom would choose to do them if it was not for the jobs they bring; and their teaching has become so compartmentalised in the efforts to attain the status of a science that they have largely lost their "humanity." They have ceased to be a cultural education and become specialised courses in pseudo-science. (2) Classical Humanism was always essentially anti-democratic and anti-scientific, anti-democratic because it derives from the slave-cultures of the ancient world, anti-scientific because it accepts Plato's vicious distinction between pure knowledge of first principles—the knowledge worthy of a ruler—and technical knowledge of details, the knowledge worthy of a slave. We first discover the principles of economics by pure theory, and then we apply them in practice. Professor Hogben sums up his attitude to orthodox social science as follows:

> The mission of humane knowledge is to prevent you from coming to definite conclusions by propounding the unanswerable.
>
> Secular Platonism has a seductive serenity which permits its votaries to believe they are rational when they are merely suspending violent effort.
>
> Speaking generally, the main difference between those who take to naturalistic and those who take to humanistic studies is this. The former remain ignorant of the latter and regret it. The latter remain ignorant of the former and boast of it.

Naturally *Dangerous Thoughts* centres its attack on Oxford and Cambridge. There dwell the high-priests of humane studies and pure knowledge; the censors, through Civil Service and Scholarship Examinations, of what is taught in the schools and what is done in Whitehall. Philosopher kings in true Platonic style, by their cult of the elegantly useless and their preference for verbal clarity over obscure discovery, they ensure that Britain shall remain the static home of social anachronisms. Nor is it only in the humane studies and in Whitehall that they rule; their influence has invaded the natural, and conquered the social, sciences, turning them, where there are no Hogbens to challenge their advance, into neat compartments of elegantly useless research.

Having denigrated our educational system, Professor Hogben turns his attack on to the philosophers, politicians and teachers of the Left. A democratic movement for the emancipation of the workers might have been expected to evolve a democratic education which would challenge the Classical Humanism with a new and dynamic Humanism of its own. This has not happened. Instead, the Adult Education Movement has sedulously aped the old universities and tried to make its students "almost as cultured" as Undergraduates; while the Labour Party, by demanding an increasing quantity of secondary education without regard to its quality, is rapidly producing a new class division between ex-elementary and ex-secondary pupils more bitter than the old. As for the Marxists, Professor Hogben, who has profited more from Marx than any of them, succeeds in confuting them on their own ground, by considering Marx's teaching in the light of its own historical conditions. He sums up:

> The history of Marxism is a record of repeated mistakes which could have been avoided if Marxists relied more on research which would reveal a number of possible contingencies and less on reasoning from insufficient data to seemingly inevitable conclusions.

So much for the iconoclasm of Hogben. But what of his constructive suggestions? At first reading, I was inclined to believe that they were vague and disjointed, but I fancy that no one can make a blue-print for democratic humanism, since it is essentially a matter of changing not the subjects taught but the spirit of the teaching. And the same is true of politics. What is wrong with the Labour Party and the Marxists critics is not their programmes but their antiquated philosophies of life. They seem entirely concerned with either destroying or re-arranging the existing social structure. But the democrat, who understands history and scientific method, cannot wish either to destroy it by violence or to rearrange it so as to allow equal distribution of our current values. He must desire and work for a society in which men can want and obtain something better than the pools, the pub, and the films. In this spirit Professor Hogben deliberately returns to the tradition of Robert Owen: he is the first of the scientific Utopians, convinced that we can, if we really will it and scientifically plan it, create a new social order, in which we exploit the unexplored potentialities of nature in the service of the unexplored potentialities of man. But this is impossible unless we can develop a new philosophy of education, freed from the dogmas both of scientific materialism and of Classical Humanism; new politicians who really believe in the possibility of a new order and understand the forces which are preventing its development; a new sort of teacher who wants his pupils not to imitate the correct procedure and appreciate the right things but to understand the world around him and change it for the better, and lastly, a "salariat," technicians, Civil servants and scientists, conscious of the social responsibility which expert knowledge brings and willing to lead the democratic movement in its struggle against the vested interests of capital and labour. The sophisticated will find this outlook naive and impractical: I find in it what I have long been searching for, a philosophy true to the tradition of British Radicalism, which strengthens that tradition with the power of systematic knowledge. *Dangerous Thoughts* begins the work of answering *Mein Kampf*. And is its author more Utopian than Herr Hitler when he wrote in 1924?

I do not wish to suggest that Professor Hogben is the prophetic leader of a regenerate Britain. He is too much of an individualist for practical politics, and has too many bees in his bonnet to inspire confidence. But his bees all buzz in the right direction. He dislikes immoderately the Eugenic Society, Professors Robins and Hayek and all "progressive" education: he likes immoderately Basic English and the joke which consists in saying the simplest things in the longest words. Most endearing of all he castigates the NEW STATESMAN as regularly as he reads it. Since he accuses us of "genteel Whiggery," let me employ the courtesy of the true Whig and encourage every reader to discover from Professor Hogben what is wrong with the NEW STATESMAN and the rest of This England.

R. H. S. CROSSMAN

CATHOLIC DEMOCRACY

Church and State. By DON LUIGI STURZO. *Centenary Press.* 21s.

For Democracy. Edited by "THE PEOPLE AND FREEDOM" GROUP. *Burns Oates.* 8s. 6d.

The Idea of a Christian Society. By T. S. ELIOT. *Faber.* 5s.

Don Sturzo is a significant figure, as a Catholic churchman, a scholar and a man of affairs. He was Professor of Philosophy and Sociology in Milan, Secretary-General of Italian Catholic Action, and the founder and leader of the Italian Popular Party. His *Church and State* is a sociological history of the Christian Church in Europe. It is a work of high scholarship, showing both mastery of a mass of historical detail and capacity to grasp and express the unity and continuity of the social process as a whole. His centre of reference throughout is the Papacy, and anyone who might be inclined to regard this as evidence of bias should remember that the Papacy is the one institution which has had a continuous existence through all the transformations of European society. Don Sturzo maintains a high standard of scholarly objectivity in his treatment of the Papacy in spite of his strong religious sympathies. To read his work is to understand the Catholic outlook upon the social problem, and the line of action to which the Catholic Church is committed by its tradition.

The interpretation and defence of democracy to which *For Democracy* is devoted rests upon the interpretation of history in *Church and State*. This book defines the outlook and policy of the "People and Freedom" Group in a series of essays by twelve able and eminent Catholic writers. Don Sturzo has a major responsibility for the symposium and contributes two of the most important chapters. These essays form a unity of exposition and express a single social outlook and policy, that of Christian Democracy. This outlook is defined by considering democracy in history, in the social order, and in relation to contemporary social movements. The result is to give a clear and definite picture of what Catholic democrats mean by democracy, and of the type of society to which their analysis commits them. It is a society in which the spiritual authority of the Church effectively limits the political authority of the State in the interests of personal freedom. It involves a hierarchical structure in society, the existence of *élites*, the maintenance of private property and a reformed capitalism.

Mr. Eliot's *Idea of a Christian Society* might almost be described as an English edition of the same social outlook. Mr. Eliot has limited himself to the task of defining the essential conditions which must obtain in any future society which is to be compatible with freedom for the Christian community within it to live the Christian life. His mastery of language enables him to remain within the limits he has set, while reaching conclusions from which a much more definite picture of the society he demands can be obtained than one might expect. The most significant of these conclusions is that the first condition must be the social recognition of Christianity as defining the true ends of human life, and so effectively limiting the policy of Governments. This, he believes, involves an established Church, a hierarchical order, and *élites*. What is impossible is that the neutrality of organised society towards religion should continue. We must become either positively Christian or positively pagan. If we were to pass from this idea of a Christian society to the political problem of its construction under contemporary conditions, it would be surprising if the defence of private property and the reform of Capitalism did not appear as necessary elements.

The attitude to the social problem contained in these books is gaining ground rapidly in religious circles. The influence of Catholic writers like M. Maritain and Mr. Christopher Dawson upon Protestant thought has been profound. The pressure of secularism may unify European Christianity on just such a basis of social theory. The Church, which must resist the encroachments of political authority or perish, may again become the symbol and centre of resistance to tyranny. The struggle for religious toleration may again become one with the struggle for democracy. In any event, the doctrine we are considering will prove important; it may prove decisive.

The importance of such books lies in the way they reveal the reason for the substitution of the struggle between Democracy and Totalitarianism for the struggle between Socialism and Capitalism. Their strength lies in their grasp of a truth that our concentration upon the organisation of society has driven out of mind. The increasing organisation of society *means* the increasing concentration of power in the hands of government. Democratic freedom *means* the limitation of the exercise of political power by the rights of personal life. In the absence of a religious conviction to maintain the values of personal life as the ends for which power may be exercised, there is no possibility of limiting the power of government. Power becomes an end itself; the means of life dictate the values of life, and the Totalitarian State is born. The defence of Christianity and the defence of freedom are inextricably bound up, and this is true whether the Totalitarian State be Socialist or Capitalist.

It is the truth of this insight that makes the doctrine so dangerous. For it obscures the equally important truth that the persistence of Capitalism makes the defence of freedom impossible. The pressure of a decaying economy *compels* the masses of Europe to identify the means of livelihood with the ends of life, and drives the spiritual values out of consciousness. If Christianity, on the defensive, identifies the defence of spiritual truth with the defence of the traditional order of society which it created, under very different conditions of life, it will find itself fighting, in queer company, for democracy against socialism. The half-truth that it sees, and the sincerity of its purpose, will not affect the result. If the side it has joined in the concrete struggle should win, it will have helped to establish a Totalitarian Fascism. If it is defeated, it will have made a Totalitarian Socialism inevitable. In either case it will have destroyed the democracy it hoped to defend, alienated the masses from religion, and reduced itself to impotence. Only the fusion, in the minds of multitudes, of the defence of Christianity with the achievement of socialism can save democracy.

JOHN MACMURRAY

A PERFECT FAMILY

A Family History, 1410-1688: The Wyndhams of Norfolk and Somerset. By THE HON. H. A. WYNDHAM. *Oxford Press.* 16s.

Here is the perfect history of the perfect English family. From 1410 to 1688 (in which year this volume most tantalisingly concludes) the Wyndhams of Norfolk and Somerset performed with urbane precision important but secondary roles in the history of their country; and their descendant has now written of them with an extreme scholarship and skill. In some ways, perhaps, the Wyndhams were too good to be true: they were too representative. Their rise to eminence, inevitably based upon a complex pyramid of marriage sales, manorial rights, messuages and moieties, began in fifteenth-century Norwich; and fifteenth-century Norwich meant the Pastons. Thus set, the tone is echoed down three centuries. The Wyndhams married with the Howards and the Scropes, they formed connections with the Dudleys, the Seymours and the Bacons; with firm, strong hands they wove their way into the fabric of the English upper class. In each generation some event peculiarly typical of the moment happened to a Wyndham—one even was beheaded on Tower Hill, in the year 1502. But he seems to have been alone among the Wyndhams to perish on the scaffold, and his elder son recovered the position his father had lost, and died a Privy Councillor, prevented only by illness from attending the Field of the Cloth of Gold. George, the other son, was a priest, when being a priest might have meant considerable effort and heart-searching; but with a docile adaptability characteristic of so many of his contemporaries, he accepted the new order in church affairs. A later Wyndham was an Elizabethan recusant, but he apparently was merely a bastard; no true Wyndham. In the next generation to that of Sir Thomas and George three brothers—Edmund, Thomas and John—each attained to a satisfying standing. Thomas, whom the author favours most, was a bluff, bearded soldier, who fought in Scotland, took to sea, became Vice-Admiral, and died while on a gold-buying expedition to the Guinea Coast. His was a vivid personality, well portrayed in the splendid Eworth picture which forms the book's frontispiece. Sir Edmund, his elder brother, rose to be High Sheriff of Norfolk (and consequently had to face the nasty problem of Kett's rebellion), attached himself first to Somerset, then ("welcoming his fall") to Northumberland; then, staunchly, to Queen Mary. The third brother, Sir John, had gone to France as a boy in the train of Mary Tudor, sister of Henry VIII, and later settled down to an enviable, busy country life at Orchard Wyndham, his wife's house in Somerset. And so we pass to the next generation and the next, and it is always the same story of loyal adhesion to the powers that were, and of a fairly even tenour of position and land. The Elizabethan section throws fascinating

light upon the defence precautions of Elizabeth's reign, and by this time we are not surprised to find Wyndhams prominent under that queen and under James I, Wyndhams killed for the king, Wyndhams aiding Charles II after the battle of Worcester, Wyndham property sequestered, a Wyndham following James II into exile and another welcoming William III at Torbay. But what emerges from this welter of marriages and appointments, of houses, lawsuits, wills of recurrent Edmunds, Thomases and Johns? A picture detailed and meticulous, polished as a porcelain tile, a picture of English life that may well be unsurpassed. And not only this; there emerges a handful of human beings whose individuality remains too potent to be concealed. The very uniformity of Wyndham excellence makes one relish the figures in this book who seem to jut up above successful, benevolent mediocrity. There is Roger Wyndham, for example, notorious for his lawsuits and trickery, who in sixteen years sued one hundred of his neighbours. There is Christabella Pyne, the exquisite wife of Edmund Wyndham of Kentsford, Christabella Pyne whom Clarendon loathed, whom Charles I "put mighty weight and trust upon," who became Lady Governess to Charles II, and "shot off a great gun" at Fairfax from the walls of besieged Bridgewater. Best of all, possibly, for the curious minded will be the horrible tale of Florence Wyndham, wife of the elder son of the Sir John who first settled at Orchard Wyndham. Married in 1558, Florence Wyndham was reverently buried in a vault of the church of St. Decumans in 1559—only to be found breathing by the sexton who had returned late on the funeral night to cut away her finger for some rings. Wandering back to the house in her cerecloths, Mrs. Wyndham (who was the sister of Nicholas Wadham, founder of Wadham College) was received with horror by her family. A fortnight later she gave birth to a son from whom descend all the male members of the Wyndham family living to-day.

By their continuity and their pertinacity the Wyndhams remained stabilised as a family of importance; but this book, from the double viewpoint of social and political history, is more important yet. Student and dilettante will find in it much to interest them, much to amuse. JAMES POPE-HENNESSY

THE SNOWS

The Alps. By R. L. G. IRVING. *Batsford.* 10s. 6d.
A Camera in the Hills. By F. S. SMYTHE. *Black.* 12s. 6d.

Both these books fulfil a useful purpose. One is a guide for climbers and walkers in the Alps of Switzerland, Germany, France and Italy; the other is a primer of alpine photography.

I have always wondered why photographs of mountains all look alike. Mr. Smythe gives the clue; there are, he says, "certain almost stereotyped rules." But that is not the end of the story; "There is," says Mr. Smythe, "one point that must be mentioned. In order to take beautiful mountain photographs it is necessary to have, or to cultivate, an artistic sense." Those who are "fortunate enough to be blessed" with this endowment need only study the technical portions of Mr. Smythe's book (or buy an exposure-meter). The rest of us, however, "need not despair." We may still acquire this invaluable asset "through methods which," says Mr. Smythe, "I shall try to make obvious."

"Photography," he tells us, "is now an art in the highest degree." Without venturing to question what is now recognised, we may well ask why it is that when all the vanishing points ("upon their position depends the rhythm and harmony of a composition") have been successfully manipulated, the right light chosen, the right aperture used, the whole weight of the artistic sense, innate or acquired through text-books, tactfully deployed, photographs of mountains should in most cases, far from giving the artistic thrill that one might hope to derive from an "art in the highest degree," fail even to conjure up a modicum of the sensations that in actual presence the scenes themselves have aroused in us.

Colour, of course, especially in the spring scenes, is badly missed. But Mr. Irving has one coloured picture (of Mont Blanc) which is certainly not more satisfying than the rest. Perhaps smell plays a greater part than is generally allowed. Particularly late in the evening snow has a definite, sometimes even a positively pungent smell, of a very healing and vivifying quality. Sound too, as Mr. Irving has rightly observed in his introduction, is a more important factor than might be supposed. In spring the glaciers are never silent. There is a sound as though hundreds of light feet were scurrying away to lock invisible doors; keys jangle and whispered words pass. So faint is this tinkling music that it is scarcely audible unless one is alone.

"A human figure, if skilfully disposed, is often a valuable asset," says Mr. Smythe, speaking as a camera-man. But he if anyone knows the advantages as well as the risks of solitary climbing. The "human asset" is one which he has in point of fact employed very sparingly in his pictures, and looking at these vast, uninhabited spaces one realises that there is a substantial minor drawback of war which the major horrors are apt to obscure: in wartime no one is ever really alone. ARTHUR WALEY

DETECTION

Some Day I'll Kill You! By DANA CHAMBERS. *Hale.* 7s. 6d.
Send Another Coffin. By F. G. PRESNELL. *Heinemann.* 7s. 6d.
Congratulate the Devil. By ANDREW MARVELL. *Gollancz.* 7s. 6d.
Mr. Pinkerton and the Old Angel. By DAVID FROME. *Longmans.* 7s. 6d.
Crime on Her Hands. By REX STOUT. *Collins.* 7s. 6d.
Death Rides Swiftly. By NEAL SHEPHERD. *Constable.* 7s. 6d.
Greek Tragedy. By G. D. H. and M. COLE. *Collins.* 7s. 6d.
Murder Abroad. By E. R. PUNSHON. *Gollancz.* 7s. 6d.
Escape into Murder. By MARR JACKSON. *Cassell.* 7s. 6d.
The Murder at Charters. By JOHN FETHALAND. *Gollancz.* 7s. 6d.
In the Teeth of the Evidence. By DOROTHY L. SAYERS. *Gollancz.* 7s. 6d.

If reading detection is, as popularly supposed, a relaxation or a soporific, why do English authors persist in making it such hard work? No one is going to sit up all night reading them for an examination. They cater for our leisure hours, and ought to allow us to take them as a treat, not as medicine. But do they? I defy any one to get through the English contributions to this list without a sense of virtuous accomplishment—"something attempted, something done." Whereas you can't possibly gallop through the American contingent and not be ashamed of yourself for wasting time in shocking self-indulgence.

Some Day I'll Kill You! is a prize specimen of the American hard-boiled variety. The author has graduated in the slick school of puff-writing for advertising managers; and he runs through the gamut of high-powered salesmanship in putting across his own branded remedy for night-starvation. You certainly won't starve at night if you read this book, provided you can lap up blood, sweat and alcohol in equal doses, with a snack of sex to go with them. "Some day I'll kill you" is what the heroine was overheard saying to her husband (one of her husbands) when he was doing something particularly beastly to her (I'm sorry, but you have to fill in that detail from your imagination). It was unfortunate for the heroine that she was overheard, seeing she was in the cabin of a private yacht; and more unfortunate still that her husband fell overboard and she married again. People began asking her for 100,000 dollars; and the hero has to shoot a number of them before they see reason. The plot is worked out almost entirely in action and dialogue; the hero hardly takes a moment off for consideration, except to consider the shape of the heroine's body. The result is a fast, exciting story with many absurd incidents but never a dull one: there is even a surprise at the finish for readers who can't keep their wits about them at high speed. Dana Chambers is a name to remember.

Send Another Coffin comes into the same American category, without quite the same frenzied vitality. On the dust-cover we see a photograph of the usual undressed lady, this time lying throttled across a bed, with a caption "All the relevant clues are in this picture!!!" Presumably the three exclamation marks are intended to qualify this statement, as the relevant clue is *not* in the picture and only turns up at the very end of the book. Such unscrupulous conduct is typical of these American toughs, who would as soon knee you in the groin as sock you on the jaw. But one must put up with it in this case, as in other respects Mr. Presnell provides very good value. I notice that a torture scene is now *de rigueur* in this class of detection. In *Some Day I'll Kill You!* it is the hero who is tortured by the gangsters. In *Send Another Coffin* it's the other way about. By next year they will be torturing the ladies on the dust-covers.

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Remember this one?

The popular account of King John's financial dealings with Jewry is that he imprisoned wealthy Hebrews and had their teeth extracted in instalments until they yielded to his extortions. In all this, however, there are extenuations for King John. The Government had to be maintained out of the royal patrimony. There was then no comprehensive and well-ordered system of rates and taxes. Nor did he deprive them of the means of livelihood or cause them to be "beaten up." His tooth-drawing was not sadistic, but a practical and, comparatively, mild way of exercising financial pressure. There was nothing malicious or destructive in it.

—*Church Times.*

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When turning from pleasure to duty we meet the dreadful English conscience even in a thriller such as *Congratulate the Devil*. Mr. Marvell is not content to borrow the idea of The Man who could Work Miracles and embroider it to his own design: he has to add a coating of uplift and a moral condemnation of the English governing classes. Surely the point of a day-dream phantasy is to let the unconscious rip and indulge the worst in us, not the best. Any ordinary person, given the power to make any living thing within a few hundred yards do his bidding, would make a more exciting job of it than Mr. Marvell.

You must enjoy Mr. Pinkerton if you are ever going to enjoy David Frome any more. The little man's personality is exploited worse than ever in *Mr. Pinkerton and the Old Angel*; and what is his personality but a combination of timidity, meanness, sentimentality and eavesdropping? The crime he butts into at a Rye hotel provides a flicker of interest, whenever we can get a peep at it over Mr. Pinkerton's shoulder, but the solution is threadbare.

Mr. Stout has dropped his Gargantuan detective, Nero Wolfe, and substitutes a misanthropic lady sleuth in *Crime on Her Hands*. Almost as soon as she arrives at a Long Island mansion she finds her host strung up to a tree by a wire. Later someone else gets wired, and before the story opens the pheasants in those parts have been suffering from the same trouble. Does that put the lady wise? Not a bit of it. She goes snooping round the water-melon patch, and betraying the inevitable banal solution by her misanthropic sympathies, even if one forgets those pheasants. Nero Wolfe had a lighter touch in spite of all his distressing personal habits.

Mr. Shepherd employs a scientific detective, Chief-Inspector Tandy, from the Hendon Police laboratory; but science in detection requires delicate handling; it should be not too difficult for the ordinary reader's comprehension, and not too long-winded for his patience. In *Death Rides Swiftly* Tandy's talents are wasted. A motor-bicycle manufacturer, with a new secret model being tested out, is murdered. Naturally we expect an improving lecture on the internal-combustion engine, but we never get it. I have a feeling that Mr. Shepherd changed his mind about his plot half way through, as the only contribution made by the motor-bicycle is the title. The solution depends on something quite extraneous, and can be readily guessed by the most unscientific reader.

The Coles have taken a Hellenic cruise and made good use of the opportunities for crime afforded by that extraordinary agglomeration of English oddities on board ship. The characters in *Greek Tragedy* are exaggerated and amusing. The plot hinges round the murder of the cruise manager in the environs of Delphi. There are political motives, and others, for wishing for his decease; and there are some anxious moments for the Left Wing, when a bunch of progressive schoolboys becomes involved with a high-minded Greek revolutionary. But the Coles run as true to form as Father Knox. Nazis may be liquidated, but the Coles will always put up alibis for the Communists. Superintendent Wilson manages to solve one of the Coles' best crimes in spite of his inadequate knowledge of modern Greek.

Mr. Punshon has also ventured abroad—to the Auvergne. Bobby Owen goes to France unofficially to solve the death of an elderly English spinster in a village near the Puy-de-Dôme. Bobby's intercourse (translated) with the local inhabitants reaches such a pitch of absurd unreality that only a most exciting and original plot could justify such nonsense. But there are no alleviating circumstances in *Murder Abroad*, and the sooner Sergeant Owen returns to duty and his mother tongue the better.

Escape into Murder is by an unfamiliar author. The plot is elementary—the whole problem centring round the alibis of three people whose fingerprints are found on a gate—but the female characters are conceived with more than usual originality. In the ruck of English detection even the slightest deviation towards better things deserves notice.

The flavour of *The Murder at Charters* is well conveyed by the closing paragraph:—

> On the Embankment Father Ethelred slept. . . . In his sleep he knew that one more soul, having gone into Heaven, yes, gone quietly in, had beckoned to the beloved. (The word beckoned should be spelt beaconed).

In flowery language Mr. Fethaland tells a strange story of how two men committed the same murder, for which neither could be convicted.

Miss Dorothy L. Sayers's volume of short stories contains two Wimseys, five Eggs and ten miscellaneous variations on crime, some of them tinged with the supernatural. The authoress is supremely competent in everything she touches, and these lively, well-written magazine stories must revive the universal regret that she has abandoned serious detection.

RALPH PARTRIDGE

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THURBER

The Last Flower. By JAMES THURBER. *Hamish Hamilton.* 5s.

This "parable in pictures" can be strongly recommended to last-moment seekers for a dazzling Christmas Card. It consists of over fifty large drawings telling a story with the help of a little text. War reduces humanity to sub-palaeolithic conditions, in which even the young have become too apathetic to feel desire. "Emboldened by the pitiful condition of the former lords of the earth, rabbits descended upon them. Books, paintings and music disappeared from the earth, and the human beings just sat around doing nothing." All forests and gardens have been destroyed, but a solitary flower springs up, love is reborn, and then civilisation, and then war, and this time all that remains is one man, one woman—and one flower. The drawings are often oddly like Lear's, and just as good. Moreover, in the battle-scenes he gets a sense of movement which gives one a new notion of his abilities. One may regret that even in his illustration of the rebirth of love, his human beings remain specimens of that sub-species which he has invented—a modern and hardly less bestial equivalent of Swift's Yahoos. Yet there is something endearing about these amazed morons—stupidity is their original sin, and ferocity only the result of this stupidity. They resemble dogs rather than baboons. The diagnosis seems correct, and the drawings further raise one's opinion of Thurber. He is the best comic artist alive.

Who's Who, 1940. *Black.* 63s.

There is no need at this date to recommend *Who's Who*; it is too well known and too indispensable a reference book for office or library. One can only give a reminder that the 1940 edition is appearing, with the usual thousand or so new potted autobiographies, covering every one that matters from Archibald, the first Bishop of the Arctic, to Adolf Hitler (telephone, Berlin 11.6191). But even so

utilitarian a book as this has a lighter side. Apart from the conscious humorists like Osbert Sitwell, who brings his own jokes up to date year by year ("1939 Instituted Joy through Intelligence campaign. *Recreations* nit-wit baiting and the Jitters") there are fascinating sidelights on the Great. Thus Mr. McGovern is proud to recall that it took eight attendants to carry him out of the House of Commons (1931): and Mr. H. de Vere Stacpoole claims that he "was first drawn towards literature by the works of Carlyle and the German metaphysicians and poets; then became acquainted with the works of the French school of writers." He then wrote *The Blue Lagoon.*

A Painter's Pilgrimage By A. S. HARTRICK, R.W.S. *Cambridge University Press.* 15s.

Something of the genial charm of the author's painting is reflected in these memoirs, though their colours are less bright. Perhaps deliberately, to give it the status of an historic past, he makes the period of Legros's Slade and Julian's Academy seem more remote than it is; or the effect may arise from the oblivion that now covers many of the book's events and characters. Too brief are the views of Gauguin swaggering at Pont-Aven, and of Van Gogh, depressed and unexpectedly mild, in Paris. The other chapters for the most part evoke fainter shades, like Freese Green, the Chelsea chemist and pioneer in colour-photography and the talkies, or James Charles, an English artist who once had a picture praised by Degas. But there is a value of first-hand record in the notes on illustrated journalism, the start of the New English Art Club, and the rise and decline of the old International Society. Curious oddments of fact worth saving keep a jogging interest alert, as that Beardsley applied for work on the *Daily Graphic*, that Meissonier had a mania for building staircases, and that Sargent said: "Every portrait is another enemy." The proof that Holbein's portrait of Erasmus in the Louvre was painted from the life will be found useful for a detective story, while it would be a good pastime to invent reasons why the two Scotch artists who went to Japan together never spoke to each other afterwards. For more specialised themes, the remarks on the craft of water-colours and of illustration command respect on the author's authority, which adds force to his praise of the late E. J. Sullivan's work. There is praise, too, for several young artists in whom the author sees promise. Except for a growl at the Soviet, the book is in the kindest mood, celebrating the past without being curmudgeonly to the present, and treating autobiography as more than a pretext for self-advertisement.

GRAMOPHONE NOTES

SIR WALTER SCOTT was temperamentally ill fitted to understand the true character of Lord Byron. An innocent, transparent nature, he took Childe Harold at his own valuation, and the result was Edgar Ravenswood. Byron's dramatic departure from England had taken place three years before *The Bride of Lammermoor* appeared (1819) and sixteen years later, when the Gothic Revival had attained its ripest development, Donizetti produced the tragic masterpiece of which the Parlophone Company have now issued a most magnificent recording. It is a work which would gain immensely from a really elaborate stage production, with an 1830 Gothic décor and costumes copied from those Staffordshire china groups with which every one is familiar. Stylisation of this kind would attenuate the absurdity of the action, reconcile us to the perfunctory characterisation, and throw into relief the sweetness and pure dramatic quality of the music. Yet, even without visual aids, how thrilling *Chi mi frena?* still is. This great sextet must, before the advent of the quintet in *Die Meistersinger*, have been the most sumptuous piece of concerted music ever composed. Musically speaking, it was probably an error on Donizetti's part not to have ended the act there, for the Finale, though vigorous and dramatically necessary, seems fussy and thin after the gorgeousness of the sextet. The team of singers assembled could hardly be bettered to-day. At the high points one may regret Caruso, Melba or Tetrazzini. But Lina Pagliughi's voice has the requisite purity and agility, and is at the same time capable of giving that impression of pathos and timidity which makes Lucy the perfect Victorian heroine. It is, however, a pity that she should ever be tempted to force her voice, for when she does so the result is simply an Italian shriek. In her cadenzas, on the other hand, she keeps far more closely to the text than did her predecessors, who went for a ramble in the country on the slightest pretext. Giovanni Malipiero makes a superbly virile Edgar, with the right touch of brutality in his tones; Giuseppe Manacchini and Muzio Giovagnoli (Henry Ashton and Arthur) acquit themselves finely; Armando Giannotti gives a most interesting rendering of Norman; and the E.I.A.R. Symphony Orchestra plays—and records—very mellifluously indeed. The thirteen records include nearly the entire opera. Apart from the usual cuts, there are only three omissions: Raymond's aria in Act II, the Edgar-Henry embroglio

The simple pleasures of a care-free life are unattainable in modern times. To-day, in a topsy-turvy world, we need the help of all the resources of science to maintain our health and our nervous forces. The article below tells you how you can meet the increased strain of life in wartime by taking an 8 weeks' course of 'Sanatogen' Nerve-Tonic Food.

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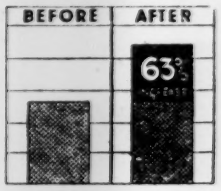

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at the beginning of Act IV, and two pages from the famous Mad Scene. The first two omissions are not serious, but the last seems to me a crime and a stupid one; for Lucia's final aria, with its lonely flute like a poor, flickering candle-flame, is one of Donizetti's greatest inspirations and the omitted pages are full of interest and beauty.

There are two first-class orchestral sets this month: Beethoven's *Fourth Symphony*, played by the B.B.C. Orchestra under Toscanini (H.M.V.), and Haydn's "*London*" *Symphony* (No. 104), played by the London Philharmonic Orchestra under Sir Thomas Beecham (Col.). The first, not being one of Toscanini's American recordings, is extremely fine. Some of the little woodwind solos in the first movement are insufficiently audible, but on the whole the balance of parts is admirable. The Scherzo and Finale are marvels of energy; in the latter each semiquaver is distinct, and the whole achieves a wonderful effect of nervous excitement under the strictest control. After careful comparison of the Edwin Fischer Chamber Orchestra's version of the "*London*" *Symphony* (H.M.V.) with the present one, I am inclined—on a very narrow margin—to give the preference to the latter. Sir Thomas takes the first Allegro and the Andante a good deal slower than Fischer; this treatment seems rather heavy for the mood of the work. On the other hand, the Beecham recording is much richer and mellower, and is quite without the rather hard string tone of the Fischer set. Enchanting as this work is, I cannot see why the Gramophone Company has duplicated it within so short a time, when several equally fine symphonies, all belonging to the same (Salomon) set, remain entirely unrecorded. The policy of recording the same work again and again within a short space of time has long obtained, but I have never heard a good defence of it.

A cheap, but far from nasty Christmas present would be the single record, by the London Philharmonic Orchestra under Anton Dorati (Col.), of four excerpts from Stravinsky's ballet, *Le Baiser de la Fée*. This work was written avowedly in honour of Tchaikovsky and has none of Stravinsky's latter-day desiccation. It is charmingly melodious and the orchestration a triumph of subtle parody. The playing and recording are excellent. Stravinsky imitating Tchaikovsky is better than inferior Tchaikovsky, and I must say I prefer *Le Baiser de la Fée* to the *Capriccio Italien*, a frankly vulgar work in which the big drum and cymbals are much overworked. This is the kind of music one would have expected to hear emerging from the bandstand on the Lees at Folkestone, *circa* 1908. The Boston Promenade Orchestra (H.M.V.) seem fully aware of the kind of music they are playing and show no false delicacy in the handling of it. The same is true of Liszt's *Hungarian Fantasia*, in the able hands of Moiseiwitsch, Constant Lambert and the London Philharmonic (H.M.V.). This is one of Liszt's emptiest and most gaudy works; but it is undeniably popular and these records do it more than justice.

I don't know what has happened to Gieseking lately. Last month we had his far too "pretty" rendering of the Beethoven *Fourth Concerto*; this month he performs the Chopin *Barcarolle* (Col.) in what appears to at least one listener a not much more acceptable manner. True, the *melismata* are exquisitely silvery and even; but the piano tone is disagreeably metallic, the first statement of the melody is hurried and superficial, and at the *Piu mosso* passage before the end, the rhythm is disturbed in the most ungainly manner. Readers should not deduce that this is a negligible performance, but only that it is extremely uneven in expressive power.

Caruso "reconstructions" are increased this month by a record containing *Una furtiva lagrima* from Donizetti's *L'Elisir d'Amore* and *Ella mi fu rapita!* from the second act of *Rigoletto* (H.M.V.). The first is beautiful music, but the superimposition of the old recording on the new, with accompanying hiss, is most painful, and the voice sounds as if it came from beyond the grave. In the second aria, however, the reconstruction is so good that almost no discrepancy is apparent. This makes the record well worth acquiring.

Last, but not least, *The Voice of Poetry*, vol. 2 (Col.). This consists of six ten-inch records on which John Gielgud delivers a fairly representative selection of short English poems, from Ben Jonson and Waller to T. S. Eliot. Mr. Gielgud's voice records extremely well; it disposes of many varieties of pitch and tone, modulated with the care of an expert singer according to the mood of the poem. To hear him recite, for example, Donne's "Death, be not proud" is a most moving experience: his consonant attack on words like "bones" has the thrilling quality of a string *sforzando*. Shakespeare is well represented by two sonnets—Nos. XVIII and LXXIII—one at each end of his vast register. The nineteenth century offers Shelley (*Ode to the West Wind* and *Ozymandias*), Byron, Kingsley (this is terrible), Christina Rossetti, Morris and Tennyson. My only serious complaint is the omission of Hopkins. The poems by the Poet Laureate and W. H. Davies cannot compete with things like "The Candle Indoors" or "Nature a Heraclitean Fire," which cry out for recitation and which I would give much to hear Mr. Gielgud deliver. On the other hand, he throws new light on that wonderful modern poem, Eliot's *Journey of the Magi*. This is a set to buy and keep: some day it may well be very valuable.

EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

WHO WAS HE?
Antony of Padua. St. born at Lisbon. August 15. 1195 was at first an Augustinian monk. but in 1220 he entered the Franciscan order. and became one of its most active propagators. He preached in the south of France and Upper Italy. and died at Padua. June 13. 1231 He was canonised by Gregory IX. in the following year According to legend. he preached to the fishes when men refused to hear him: hence he is the patron of the lower animals. and is often represented as accompanied by a pig. See Chronicle of St Anthony of Padua. edited by the Rev H J Coleridge (1883)
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Week-end Competitions

No. 515

Set by R. H. S. Crossman

Some years ago THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION set a Christmas General Knowledge Paper. Professor Hogben objected that it was a test not of general knowledge, but of the special sort of useless information which goes by the name of Culture.

The usual prizes are offered for a general knowledge paper (not more than 300 words) which really is a test of *general* knowledge.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday, Dec. 29th.
2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.
3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.
4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

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RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 513

Set by G. St. Aubyn

The usual prizes are offered for a pair of letters (not more than 120 words each), the first from an evacuated child, the second from the child's host, both addressed to the child's parents.

Report by G. St. Aubyn

In this competition the main idea of the majority of competitors seemed to be to cram in words such as "cow," "bitch," "Ruddy," presumably in order to give local colour.

Another prevailing note was a slightly snobby one. Either the child seemed to overstress the grandeur of his new surroundings, or the hostess would comment on the fact that her guest was plebeian. This, of course, was done in a veiled manner, but the fact was clearly conveyed.

The now familiar grievances about dirty heads, bad manners, the absence of cinemas, the preference for tinned food duly appeared. Oddly enough, few letters gave a vivid picture of either the child or the hostess. Few indeed rang true. Mr. C. F. Rathbone did, with his child writing from the country where his preparatory school had been evacuated.

". . . . I hope that you will be able to get that cottage for Christmass because I don't want to spend Christmass here."

And the schoolmaster, with the same feeling, includes in his letter to John's parents: "The staff and I, having been here since Sept. 2nd, are anxious to get a short holiday at Christmas and we hope that parents will be able to take their children away for at least a part of the holidays." Another human note in this letter was the following: "You will be glad to hear that his shoes have now been found; but they were not, as you thought, marked."

Advantage was not often taken of the points of view of town-bred children in the country.

Miss V. Davey does, however, make her child write: "We have been out picking holly, you don't buy it here." It was an amusing letter with this original item in the hostess's letter.

"Fancy, Dot took a dead rabbit to bed and she cried so when we took it away that we stuffed one for her."

A. D. Astra also made the town child aware of the country, for her Tim writes: "There is more heaven here without all them houses'n stars shine bright when there's no lights."

The first prize goes to W. C. Eyre Hartley, because in his two letters you get a clear picture in a few words of a well meaning couple who do not understand children and of a lonely child's reaction to the kind treatment that he is receiving.

The second prize goes to Allan Short for the witty brevity and reality of his two letters.

FIRST PRIZE

DEAR MRS. JONES,

As your little boy has now been with us for over three months, I thought you would like a little note to tell you how he is getting on. We have seen that he sent you little notes every week, but children do not always tell us just everything we want to know. He is a dear little fellow and has caused us no trouble at all, except perhaps that he sometimes forgets to wipe his boots and at first seemed to prefer running about the streets on Sunday afternoons instead of sitting quietly at home reading good books, but all told we are getting along splendidly and he and Mr. Postlethwaite are great chums.

Yours very sincerely,
MARY POSTLETHWAITE

DEAR MUM,

I wish you were here. I have plenty to eat and have a bath in a big bath every week, but you daren't touch nothing for fear of spoiling it, it's so posh. I wish I could play in our back yard again instead of sitting still reading Sundays. I have to play trains with the gentleman but he isn't much good, but he likes it so I play with him.

Love,
JIM

SECOND PRIZE

Weeping Willow Villa,
Scratchley

DEAR MUM,

What she ses happened Saturday isn't true. You can't believe a word the old cow says.

Your loving daughter,
EVE

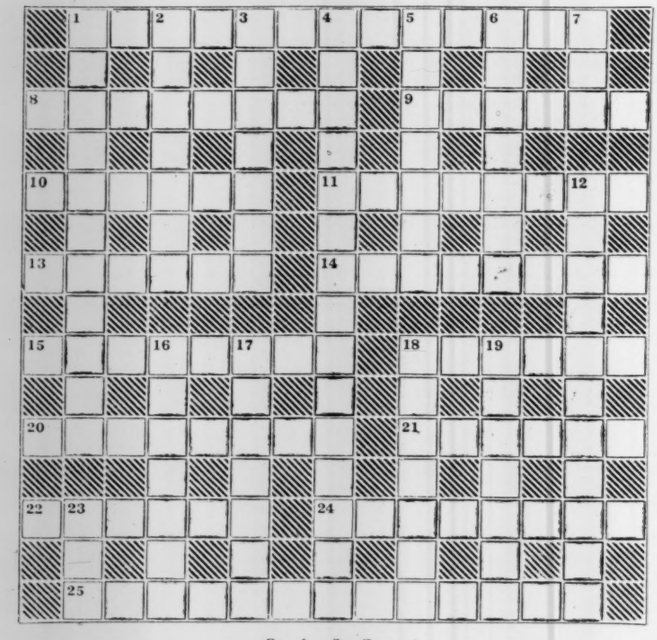
DEAR MRS. VERITAS,

Your little girl has been writing to you all afternoon about what happened Saturday. I only hope you will be able to believe all she says.

I am, yours truly,
MRS. EDITH CHILLIBOTTOM

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 511

Books to the value of Five Shillings may be chosen by the sender of the first correct solution opened. Post solutions to arrive not later than first delivery Wednesday following the date of issue, addressed to "CROSSWORDS," 10 Great Turnstile, London, W.C.1.



Set by L.-S.

The last week's winner is
N. H. Parker, Windsor Crescent, Berwick-on-Tweed

ACROSS

1. Batmen in mufti? (13)
8. The better horse. (8)
9. Both Peter and Paul. (6)
10. A great thing for Londoners in the reign of Charles II. (6)
11. Minus terminal. (8)
13. A change for the sirens. (6)
14. I have a broken lantern. (8)
15. Place built by Tom Green. (8)
18. Port ray, close up. (6)
20. He rakes in the shekels. (8)
21. This peerage of course goes in for the Hay diet. (6)
22. The mark of a beating? (6)
24. Where one formerly elected to have one's beer. (8)
25. She was barged to death. (13)

DOWN

1. The King of Rumania feeling cheerful in his bath perhaps. (11)
2. The Uncommercial Traveller makes them oversea. (7)
3. I left the vaseline for you to order. (7)
4. Their batteries are only given light work to do. (15)
5. Appropriate appellation for a verminous little evacuee. (7)
6. The Bible is a little out of place in the upstanding Navy. (7)
7. We are fortunately not restricted to this day for it. (3)
12. Enemy aircraft should do it in vain over this country during the blackout. (11)
16. Problematically done by = (7)
17. Enough to make a lion coo. (7)
18. Not a sound proposition for a sailor. (7)
19. Or not in Porto Rico. (7)
23. It would be superficial to put them in the show. (3)

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

P	O	R	T	R	A	I	T	P	A	I	N	T	E	R
A	■	U	■	I	■	N	■	O	■	N	■	W	■	A
R	E	N	E	G	A	D	E	S	■	C	R	E	E	D
L	■	U	■	M	■	I	■	T	■	H	■	N	■	I
I	N	P	R	A	C	T	I	C	E	■	O	T	T	O
A	■	■	■	R	■	E	■	A	■	I	■	Y	■	T
M	I	C	R	O	N	■	T	R	O	M	B	O	N	E
E	■	O	■	L	■	T	■	D	■	P	■	N	■	L
N	A	N	K	E	E	N	S	■	R	E	C	E	D	E
T	■	D	■	S	■	E	■	E	■	R	■	■	■	G
A	R	I	D	■	I	C	I	N	G	S	U	G	A	R
R	■	M	■	A	■	S	■	D	■	O	■	L	■	A
I	D	E	A	L	■	E	V	I	T	N	I	A	L	P
A	■	N	■	T	■	C	■	N	■	A	■	R	■	H
N	A	T	I	O	N	A	L	G	A	L	L	E	R	Y

NOTE.—Creed½—"Childe Harold"

London Amusements

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A Gay Comedy by MACHIAVELLI.
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Sarah Churchill, John Laurie, Ivan Brandt.

PHOENIX. Tem. 8611. 7.30. Wed., Th., Sat. 2.30
Extra Matinee Boxing Day, 2.30.
JUDGMENT DAY
London's Greatest Thrill. 1/6 to 8/6.

PICCADILLY. (Ger. 4506.) Evgs. 7.45. Sat., 2.30.
(from Boxing Day. Twice Daily, 2.30, 7.45.)
SYBIL THORNDIKE, EMLYN WILLIAMS.
THE CORN IS GREEN
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ROBERTSON HARE. ALFRED DRAYTON in
SPOTTED DICK
A new farce by BEN TRAVERS.

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ME AND MY GIRL
with TEDDIE ST. DENIS

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THEN there is always KINGSTON.
Enquiries to The Secretary, Kingston, Edinburgh, 9

THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By CYNICUS

TAXATION OF EXCESS OR EXCESSIVE PROFITS ?—" SHELTERED EQUITIES "—BASE METALS—TEXTILES

In wartime it will not be so unseasonal to talk of taxation in a Christmas week. Mr. Edward Baron, the Chairman and Managing Director of Carreras, congratulated his fellow-shareholders at the General Meeting on having made such a large tax contribution towards the national needs. They had produced a record profit (over £2,000,000), but income tax, national defence contribution and excess profits tax had taken £547,000, against £185,000 in the previous year. In other words, nearly all the rise in profits had been eaten up by the rise in taxation. This is as it should be. As compared with other tobacco companies, Carreras are making a large contribution to the Exchequer, but as a group the prosperous producers of consumer goods are not contributing as much as they might do under a rational system of taxation. Having fat pre-war " standard " years, they will pay very little in excess profits tax. The wealthy tobacco and food group will come off lightly as compared with many other industrial companies of like importance. I agree with Mr. Kenneth Moore, a business man and an accountant who is an expert on taxation, in regarding the excess profits tax as an unjust and wholly inadequate imposition. Why should we favour businesses which were fully established and flourishing in the pre-war years at the expense of their less fortunate or less mature competitors ? By taking 60 per cent. of " excess profits " the Treasury is in effect countenancing *excessive* profits and sharing in the swag. By allowing any excessive profits at all in wartime, which is indecent anyway, the Treasury is indirectly contributing to the rise in the cost of living and the great inflation which the Chancellor is pledged to avoid. Mr. Moore has boldly suggested that the excess profits tax should be abolished altogether and that in its place there should be (1) an increase in the national defence contribution (from 5 per cent. to say 20 per cent.), which is a straight and honest tax on business profits ; and (2) a 100 per cent. tax on *excessive* profits. I cannot understand why the Labour Party has not taken up the same line. A definition of *excessive* profits is not difficult. It has already been established that different classes of business should earn different percentages of profit on their capital and these percentages have been defined in a number of cases as a result of the excess profits duty of the last war. By raising the national defence contribution the Government would be forcing all wealthy companies to do their taxation bit, and by confiscating all *excessive* profits it would set an honest example to everyone—by declining to become a partner in the profiteering game.

* * *

Which brings me to the " sheltered " equities. In peacetime the " sheltered " equities were those of companies operating, like the gas and electricity supply companies, in industries protected or regulated by Acts of Parliament. In wartime they belong to industries controlled on benevolent lines by Government orders issued for the most part by the Ministry of Supply. The tobacco companies are, as I have explained, luckily placed rather than " sheltered," but they will be included in my list. The sheltered equities proper are those of companies like Imperial Chemical Industries, British Aluminium, Tate and Lyle, etc., whose trade is so happily controlled by the Ministry of Supply that stable dividends are assured. In the case of British Aluminium and Tate and Lyle the Government actually supplies the raw material on terms which afford a handsome margin of profit. Amalgamated Metal is another company in a specially " sheltered " position. This combine before the war controlled practically the entire Empire output of lead and zinc, and the nickel output of International Nickel. Although it did not control the Rhodesian copper it had a director of Rhokana on its board. It was natural for the Government, which actually had the right to appoint a nominee on its board, to use Amalgamated Metal as its official broker. It might be assumed that for the duration of the war this company is a Government agent and will be remunerated fairly. Whether its 7 per cent. dividend will be guaranteed I do not know. To complete my list I will add one copper share which comes within the " sheltered " class rather than the very limited group of " inflation hedges." Here are the prices and dividend yields of this list of companies which are representative of the " sheltered " class :

	High, 1939	Present Price	Last Dividend	Gross Div. Yield, %
Amalgamated Metal, £1 ..	24/3	20/-	7%	£7 0 0
British Aluminium, £1 ..	59/-	50/-	12½%	£5 0 0
Imperial Tobacco, £1 ..	7 3/32	5 31/32	21½% net†	£5 15 3
Imperial Chemical, £1 ..	32/6	28/7½	8%	£5 14 3
Rhokana, £1	12 1/16	11	50%	£5 7 3
Tate and Lyle, £1 ..	3¼	2⅞	13¼%	£4 13 9

† Equivalent of former 25% net with tax at 7/6.

* * *

If any investor imagines that the rise in the prices of base metals this week should put Rhokana in the " inflation hedge " class, he is much mistaken. The Ministry of Supply bought up the entire output of the copper, lead and zinc producers of the Empire for the duration of the war at the prices ruling at the beginning of the war. These prices were f.o.b. and, I understand, cannot be advanced under the agreements unless the producers can show a rise in their costs. Moreover, the market is wrong in supposing that the producers can break this agreement in twelve months. This week the Ministry of Supply raised the c.i.f. prices—electrolytic copper from £51 to £62, lead from £17¼ to £25, and zinc from £15⅝ to £25¾ per ton. (Previously quoted " ex warehouse " these prices are now quoted " delivered to consumers' premises.") Having exhausted pre-war stocks, the Government is now forcing consumers to pay for the extra cost of freight and insurance, and is at the same time improving its " turn." This is the great benefit of the " Lyttleton " agreements : the turn goes to the Government and not to the producers.

* * *

Cotton and rayon shares are becoming perhaps almost too popular on the Stock Exchange. After dismal years of depression the huge Government demand for cloth for the fighting services is bringing relief, if not prosperity, to Lancashire. But what about the effect of excess profits tax on textile company profits ? The rayon industry benefits, of course, from the textile recovery, which explains the remarkable rise this year in Courtaulds shares from 22*s.* 9*d.* to 36*s.* 6*d.*, and in British Celanese preference shares—the first from 9*s.* 3*d.* to 19*s.* 9*d.* and the second from 5*s.* to 15*s.* 9*d.* But what about the rise in raw material costs ? The investor must not forget his caution.

Company Meeting

CARRERAS LIMITED

THE Thirty-sixth Annual General Meeting of Carreras, Ltd., was held at Arcadia Works, London, N.W., on Tuesday, December 19th.

Mr. Edward S. Baron (chairman and managing director) said that the net profit for the year was £2,005,839, which established a new record in the company's history, being £401,205 higher than last year. The result was mainly due to a further increase in the general demand for their well-known brands, other factors being a continued advance in the efficiency of their manufacturing processes and the maintenance of the high standard and never varying quality of their products.

The amount available for distribution was £2,242,000, and they recommended that the dividend on all classes of ordinary shares, as increased by the bonus distribution made last year, should be at the rate of 30 per cent. for the year, leaving a balance of £303,210 carried forward. The provision for various taxes was naturally on a much higher scale than anything previously experienced.

The past year had been one of more than usual strain and anxiety, for, apart from the many problems connected with two increases in Duty, there had been many others to be faced. Alternative factory accommodation and extra warehousing space had had to be considered, and they were in process of equipping a small-scale factory in case of emergency and also of extending the factory premises of their associated company, John Sinclair, Limited.

In most parts of the world their business had shown an increase. The unsettled conditions which had prevailed throughout the whole year and which had culminated in the outbreak of war, had added to their difficulties, not the least of which had been that of foreign exchange. They attached great importance to the retention of their export business and he could assure shareholders that the directors would continue to do everything possible to maintain the important position they had established in overseas markets and to meet the changing situations as they arose.

After stating that they were executing orders for the supply of their popular brands of cigarettes to the Services, he concluded by saying that the increasing of the Duty on tobacco twice within six months was unprecedented, but it was premature to say what the effect would be on the current year. The new financial year had had a good beginning, but it would be unwise to make any forecast. That there would be difficulties under war conditions they were fully aware, but they would adapt themselves to changing circumstances.

The report was adopted.

LECTURES AND MEETINGS

24 UNIVERSITY OF LONDON Extension Lectures on "THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE" begin on January 2nd at THE INSTITUTE FOR THE SCIENTIFIC TREATMENT OF DELINQUENCY, 8 Portman Street, London, W.1. Mayfair 8311. Syllabus on application. Full particulars in next week's issue.

THE ETHICAL CHURCH, Queensway, Bayswater, W.2. Morning service only. Sunday, December 24th, at 11, VIRGINIA FLEMMING: "THE INCARNATION OF GOODNESS IN HUMAN BEINGS."

SOVIET PROGRESS. Four Saturday afternoon lectures, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1. Jan. 13th, Sir Charles Trevelyan on "Soviet Democracy"; Jan. 20th, Mr. D. N. Pritt on "The U.S.S.R. and Colonies"; Jan. 27th, Dean of Canterbury on "Moral Aspects of the U.S.S.R."; Feb. 3rd, Mr. Pat Sloan on "Politics of the U.S.S.R." Commence 3 p.m. Single lectures, 1s. Course tickets, 3s., from RUSSIA TO-DAY SOCIETY, 8 Red Lion Square, W.C.1.

SCHOOLS AND EDUCATIONAL

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